THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN

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THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN

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The first Two Centuries of the
First Congregational Church at
Washington, Connecticut
1741 — 1941

by
WILBUR STONE DEMING

HARTFORD
BRENTANO'S
1941

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Wilbur Stone Deming

Designed by
Laurence Gomme
Printed in the U. S. A. by H. Wolff, New York

1513949

TO ALL THOSE

who, in the years that have gone, have
given themselves to the work and
fellowship of this church and
who have thus helped to
make it a vital in-
fluence in this
community.

Preface

THE KEEN INTEREST of many residents of Washington in the history of their town has made possible the writing of this book. It would not be possible to mention by name all who have explored or written about the history of this community. To Miss Amy Kenyon, Mrs. A. C. Titus and many others I am under deep obligation. Much laborious spade work has been done by them and I have reaped the fruits of their labors. A book that was solely dependent upon church records and resolutions would necessarily be dull and technical. The town history papers kept in the Gunn Memorial Library are of great value to any one who would understand the history of this town.

This book is primarily the story of a New England Congregational Church during two centuries of its life. The substance of the book has been largely determined by the records of the Ecclesiastical Society and of the church, supplemented by other material as mentioned above. Readers will note that a great deal of information has been left out of the book. This can be explained on the basis that the records are by no means complete. It can also be explained on the simple ground of the impossibility of putting everything in. In fact

it has been the desire of the writer to trace the story of the church in its significant developments and interests rather than to quote statistics or discuss routine matters. The author would therefore apologize to all those who may feel that insufficient attention has been paid to what this or that person may have done on behalf of the church. He readily recognizes the many limitations of the book.

Indirectly this narrative endeavors to observe the American scene in its various national epochs in terms of this particular community. True enough, the members of the First Congregational Church of Washington have been but one segment of this community. Yet they have been typical of the community as a whole and in the early days the affairs of the church and the town were closely identified. In fact, until the incorporation of Washington as a separate town in 1779, Judea was a parish under the authority of the committees appointed by the members of the Ecclesiastical Society and of the church.

I wish to thank all those who have given generously of their time and of their advice in the preparation of this book. A number have kindly put at my disposal old letters or records which are in their possession. I am under obligation to Joseph I. West and to John Trevor of Yale University for assistance in the preparation of photographs. A word of appreciation is due to those members of the Bi-Centenary Committee who have aided in the publication of this book. I wish to thank all the subscribers who by their loyal support have made the publication possible. I want to express my sincere appreciation to Laurence Gomme for his generous assistance in preparing the book for publishing.

My thanks are also due to S. Ford Seeley and Dr. F. W. Wersebe for their generous help in the securing of sub-

scriptions, and to Mrs. Ruth Hollister for her aid in preparing the index.

Readers will note certain items in the book not directly related to the history of the Congregational Church. It was thought that their inclusion would add to the general interest.

The writing of the book has been a labor of love. No one can perform such a task without coming to have a new appreciation of the years that have gone and of the men and women whose sacrifices and services have given us our great American and Christian heritage.

WILBUR S. DEMING.

April 30, 1941.

MINISTERS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WASHINGTON

Reuben Judd
1742 to 1747

Daniel Brinsmade
1748 to 1793

Noah Merwin
COLLEAGUE OF MR. BRINSMADE
1785 to 1795

Ebenezer Porter
1795 to 1811

Cyrus W. Gray
1813 to 1815

Stephen Mason
1818 to 1828

Gordon Hayes
1829 to 1851

Ephraim Lyman
1852 to 1863

W. H. H. Murray
1863 to 1864

Willis S. Colton
1866 to 1876

George S. Thrall
1877 to 1881

William Crawford
1882 to 1883

Herbert B. Turner
1884 to 1892
1933 to 1935

Robert E. Carter
1894 to 1925

Pastor Emeritus to
Tertius van Dyke

Hamish C. Mathew
ACTING PASTOR
1925 to 1935

Wilbur S. Deming
1935

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THE CHURCH ON THE GREEN

CHAPTER ONE

The State and the Steeple

THERE IS no feature of the Connecticut countryside more familiar to the traveler than the church steeple, reaching above the spreading elms or silhouetted against the evening sky. One may indeed think of the steeple as a symbol of the state, a state founded by a church-loving people. For no sooner had homes been established in a given area by a group of pioneer colonists than they began to think about the construction of a meeting-house. From the earliest days, the church was the center of village life and loyalty. The steeple looked down upon the people and reminded them of their God.

The settling of the state is a romantic story, a story of courage and incredible hardships and persistent faith. It is a story of hills and rivers, of forests and stones, of human ingenuity matched against the resources of nature, of men and women determined to carve out for themselves a new life in a new land. It is a story of human liberty that found ultimate expression in a great political document, namely, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut. The people of Connecticut are justly proud of their state. It may be small in area but not in significance.

It is not our purpose in this brief introductory chapter to do more than briefly touch upon the characteristics and living conditions of the early colonists of Connecticut.

The earliest settlement was in the vicinity of Hartford where in 1636 there were three settlements, at Wethersfield, Hartford and Windsor. The most famous leader among them was Thomas Hooker who had led a group from the banks of the Charles River near Boston to the present site of the state capitol. It may be that he found the Massachusetts theocracy rather cramping for his personal religious views. At any rate we know that he held opinions which in those days were distinctly liberal.

Two years later there was a settlement at what is now New Haven under the leadership of the Reverend John Davenport. Being rather prosperous Londoners, this group of two hundred and fifty settlers had purchased ample lands and had established themselves for the purpose of ordering their affairs "by those rules which the scripture holds forth to us." Meeting in a barn, according to Odell Shepard, they agreed that "*church members only* shall choose among themselves magistrates and officers to have power of transacting all public affairs of this plantation and of making and repealing laws."

Before many years passed, the sons and daughters of the Connecticut colony began to push out into the wilderness. It was about 1720 that the pioneers reached the hills now included in Litchfield County. It was in 1741 that the first preaching service took place in Judea, now called Washington. In the years that followed, the hardy settlers of Connecticut continued to push on into the wilderness, some of these journeys taking them a long way. Along the rivers and trails, they pushed their way year by year, establish-

ing settlements and building their churches and their schools. Those who reached the present Middle Western States called the area the Western Reserve of Ohio.

No story of the settling of Connecticut would be complete without a reference to the Indians who inhabited the land before the coming of the white man. As far as we know they were members of the Algonquin family, a tribe that was inferior to the Indians who resided in the valley of the Hudson. The Connecticut Indian paid tribute to the Iroquois. It was a cruel age and it is not surprising that the colonists soon found themselves at odds with the Indians who doubtless resented their presence. The account of the defeat of the Indians at Mystic on May 26th, 1637, is not pleasant reading. The victory over the Indians was so complete in the early years, however, that there was little trouble in Connecticut from that time onward.

The settlers faced an unending struggle with the land. Visitors to the state are familiar with the numerous stone walls decorating pasture lands. They are an ever-present reminder of the industry of our ancestors who had to wring a living out of the rocky soil. Geologists tell us that the land of Connecticut was not only well sprinkled with stones in its own right but that the glacier thoughtlessly brought down numerous stones from northern New England during the glacial period. To clear the land of stones and remove the tree stumps and prepare the land for cultivation was no easy task.

The people who settled this state were a hardy folk. They were not unaccustomed to difficulties of many kinds. They were a freedom-loving people and descended from the tribes which had fought the Roman legions. The love of freedom had persisted during the centuries of residence on the east-

ern coast of England, despite bitter persecution. The early settlers in Connecticut had suffered for their faith before coming to these shores. Their religion was therefore doubly precious and meaningful to them. They had endured because their faith was strong.

In a sense, therefore, they were prepared for the hard discipline that awaited them on these shores. The Connecticut wilderness was no sinecure. Sitting in the comfort of our modern homes, it is difficult for us to visualize the conditions of life that existed during the seventeenth century. It was a cold climate. The soil was thin and not very fertile. There were few roads. Travel was usually on horseback and was slow owing to the hard going. The earliest houses were of logs but were soon replaced by frame dwellings. While each home had a large open fireplace, the dwellings were poorly heated. Food was simple and was cooked at the fireplace. All in all, life was exceedingly primitive during the early years, accompanied by continuous toil and worry over food, wolves and Indians.

Yet their faith was sufficient for the task. They had a profound consciousness of the presence of God in their lives, believing that they were instruments of the divine will. In the preamble to the Fundamental Orders, they stated that they were joined in one commonwealth "to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, which we now profess, as also the discipline of the churches, which, according to the truth of said Gospel is now practiced among us." This faith in God's sovereignty controlled all their public and private actions. Rigid self-inspection was the rule and candidates for church membership were questioned in detail in regard to their faith. Salvation was not easily achieved and conversion was often of a rather violent nature.

The struggle between the forces of good and evil was intensely realistic to the Puritan mind and whatever occurred took place, they believed, through the will of God.

George L. Clark, in his "History of Connecticut" relates an incident in which two settlers spent a long evening in discussion of the divine decrees. Finally one took his gun and stepped out into the darkness to return home. The other exclaimed, "What's the use of the gun? If it is foreordained that an Indian should kill you, you cannot help yourself." "True," said the other, "but if it is foreordained that I should kill an Indian, I must be ready."

It is not surprising that such rigid and almost fanatical views could succumb to distortion or deteriorate into superstition. The thought still prevailed in Europe that Satan was exploiting the world as the enemy of God. The verse in Exodus 22:18, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was a familiar one. It is stated that over a hundred thousand persons were put to death in Europe during the three centuries in which the delusion of witchcraft prevailed. Connecticut was not free from this delusion and ten people were put to death during the craze. In contrast with other places, this small number is a credit to the common sense of Connecticut lawyers and ministers.

In many of the early communities, the meeting-house served both as a religious center and as a civic center. The site of the building was carefully chosen for the convenience of the settlers. The building of the meeting-house was a cooperative venture in which men gave their services as a labor of love. The "raising" of the building was usually done at a "bee" when all the voters came out to fit the timbers, beams and joists together, after the raising of the heavy

frame. Heavy work required heavy drinking and both rum and cider were available in quantity.

We marvel today at the beauty of many of the meeting-houses constructed in the early days. With simple tools and limited equipment, the builders often worked a miracle. Christopher Wren might well be proud of some of the Colonial churches dotting the Connecticut landscape, with their graceful pillars and lovely spires. It may be that some of the master carpenters possessed books on classical architecture which they were able to consult. Be that as it may, we are amazed at their beautiful workmanship.

The high pulpit was customary for most church interiors and beneath it there was usually a pew for the singers. In many of the early churches the pews were square, of the box type. The seating was often done by a committee and accepted by a vote of the community. In arranging the seating, social rank, wealth and political importance were all considered. In the early days the men and the women sat apart on different sides of the meeting-house. It was important that each church have a way of reminding the worshipers that it was time for the meeting. In the absence of a bell, a trumpet might be blown or a drum sounded. But it was the ambition of each community to secure a belfry and a bell at the earliest possible moment.

The sermon was the most important part of the worship service and usually tested the endurance of the people. It is not surprising that our forefathers were called a stiff-necked people in view of their capacity to listen to a two-hour sermon, preached in a pulpit well above their heads. In addition to the prayer and the sermon, psalm-singing was a sacred rite. The minister "lined out the psalm two lines at a time" and when the chorister had set the tune the people

sang it, the process being repeated again and again. To sing loudly seemed to be a sign of musical talent. As an old man put it, in a religious dispute with a neighbor of a different church, "Well, we'll sing the loudest in heaven, howsomever."

Musical instruments were extremely limited. Neither the trumpet, the drum nor the jew's-harp were of a nature to inspire high thought or reverence. The bass viol was often used for church services, later being replaced by the melodeon or the flute. The small reed organ did not come until later.

To sit in an unheated building for several hours with a zero temperature outside was a rigorous procedure. Marion Nicholl Rawson in her book, "When Antiques Were Young" quotes a letter written by a Connecticut woman in 1672 to an elder in the Meeting as saying "she and her neighbors have almost gotten their banes from exposure." Among the devices for keeping warm were heated stones, hot potatoes and earthen water bottles. In some places wolf skins were sewed into bags and nailed along the front edge of the seat. There were foot stoves of wood and tin, as also hand warmers of various types.

But winter was always followed by spring and summer. Then the problem was not one of cold but rather of drowsiness as the minister's voice droned on like a lullaby, putting people to sleep. On such occasions the tithing-stick was apt to come into use. The hard end of the stick with a rabbit's foot was reserved for the men and the other end of the stick with a rabbit's tail was used for the women.

Marion Nicholl Rawson tells of "Noggin Benny" Sleeper whose custom it was to take a Sunday morning nap during the sermon. One sabbath morning the text was "Where art thou, Oh sleeper"? Toward the end of the sermon the minister reiterated the question in ringing tones which awakened

the sleepers. From a northside aisle came an unconscious and guttural response: "Makin' wooden noggins, you old devil you—what be you wanting"?

The minister occupied a position of leadership in the community and held a high place in the esteem of the people. He usually was the scholar of the area and did the work of the historian, keeping the record of local happenings. Preparation for the ministry was usually obtained in the library of an older preacher with whom the student studied. When a minister was called to a particular church, a settlement was made with him, this being the financial arrangement between him and the church members. Money was scarce and therefore the settlement often included payment in grain, wood and various items of food. It was customary to have donation parties when the parson's wood or food were running low. People placed the parson in a special category and thought of him as a charge to be kept. In the diary of a parishioner of the seventeenth century is this item: "Ponder more on ye godly discourse of Mr. Whiting touching sanctification and kerry him a load of woode."

Modern historians have poked considerable fun at the "blue laws" of early New England. The writer recalls a police commissioner in Boston who attempted to revive some of these early laws and who was soon replaced by a more modern-minded commissioner. Much of the publicity concerning the severity of early Connecticut laws was due to the history written by an Episcopal minister of Connecticut named Samuel Peters who held strong loyalist convictions and returned to England in 1774. Among the laws he listed were the following: "It was criminal for a mother to kiss her infant on the Sabbath-day"; "No one shall read Common Prayer, keep Christmas or Saints-days, make mince pies,

dance, play cards or play on any instrument of music except the drum, trumpet and Jews' harp."

Calm judgment makes it clear that Peters' history was an exaggerated account because of his personal bias. Yet it is also clear that there were numerous laws of a repressive nature. Laws governing the keeping of the Sabbath were especially strict. The Sabbath really began on Saturday afternoon and from that time forward all unnecessary activities were to be suspended.

In the early days of the colonies it was not the custom for the minister to perform the marriage ceremony. This was usually done by a magistrate or one specially authorized to do it. It was not until the beginning of the 18th century that the Puritan minister assumed the function of solemnizing marriages.

In a somewhat similar manner, there were no religious services at a funeral in early New England. Perhaps this was due to the desire to break away from the custom of the Roman Church to say prayers for the dead. Lechford has given a picture of a funeral of New England in the 17th century, in the following terms: "At burials nothing is read, nor any funeral sermon made, but all the neighborhood or a goodly company of them come together by tolling of the bell, and carry the dead solemnly to his grave, and then stand by him while he is buried. The ministers are most commonly present."

It must not be thought, however, that life for our Puritan forefathers was entirely a somber or drab affair. Human nature has a way of asserting itself and breaking through whatever barriers are seeking to bind it. This was true in early Connecticut. In pioneering days the "bee" was a popular form of community cooperation. It was a country

gathering when neighbors came together to give a helping hand to one of their number who had a task too big for his own strength, or possibly for some improvement in the country-side. It was usually an all-day affair and accompanied by a good deal of work as well as a good deal of play. There were bees for log-rolling and stump pulling, for barn and house raising and for breaking out the winter roads after a blizzard. There were bees for chopping a winter supply of wood and for removing large stones from a clearing. The women prepared a hot meal for every one and the young people were there to get all the fun possible. In moments of relaxation there would be the country dancing with the hornpipes and the reels.

In spite of the Puritan laws, there was a great love of dancing and many were the folk dances created in the early days, with the ladies lined up on one side and the gentlemen on the other. There was great competition among the fiddlers and prizes were sometimes given to the best fiddler in the county. Popular jig tunes of the early days are still familiar to lovers of the country dance, such as "Turkey and the Straw" and "Pop Goes the Weasel."

The early Puritans were fond of wit and of puns and used to chaff each other with a dry sort of humor. They found great amusement in outwitting each other in a business deal. "Boys will always be boys" and this was no less true in early Connecticut. Pioneer boys were fond of pranks as are boys today. They enjoyed contests in which they could compete in feats of strength and muscle. They lifted heavy weights and shattered distant objects with a gun. To be the "strong man" of a community was a great honor for any man. Wrestling matches were common. In lighter moments, boys loved to steal gates and hide them a mile away or paint front

doors with maple syrup or roll a bucket of water under a neighbor's door. Winter sports were always popular, such as skating and sliding down hill.

Although magistrates often denounced shows as a waste of time, people were hungry for amusement and flocked to exhibitions of various kinds. The tavern was a favorite place for the performances of petty fakirs and the exhibition of amusing inventions. Wild animals were sometimes carried around in ox carts and exhibited to admiring crowds. But it was not until after the Revolutionary War that theatrical performances began to make their appearance in the larger towns and even then there was strong opposition on the part of clergymen. It must be confessed that the punishment of offenders was often a form of diversion of a rather cruel nature. The publicity given to such punishment was due to the idea that it would prove a warning to others.

During the eighteenth century the lottery was a popular form of amusement and apparently had the sanction of the community as a whole. Reputable citizens bought and sold tickets. Many schemes for public benefit were conducted and assisted through lotteries. Various colleges increased their endowments and various churches raised necessary funds in this manner. Bridges and roads and public buildings were built through lotteries.

The early tavern with its bar was a social center for the more roisterous spirits and had its familiar pastimes such as "pitching coins." When the weather was fine, chairs would be moved out doors where there would be sports or perhaps cockfights. The tavernkeeper was generally a man of hospitality and always willing to please his guests. To the tavern would come the inveterate peddler with his tinware for housewives. There also might come the traveling evangelist

or itinerant preacher. In 1742 so many preachers were traveling around that the Assembly of Connecticut passed a law forbidding ministers to preach out of their own parishes without permission.

No picture of early Connecticut would be complete without a reference to the old-fashioned schoolhouse. Hartford was not over three years old when John Higginson opened a school there. In 1644 the legislature of Connecticut established a school system. There was great need for schools as many of the people had little education and some owners of property could not even write their names. The duty of establishing a school was laid upon local town authorities with the request that they work with parents in the effort "not to suffer so much barbarism in any of the families as to have a single child unable to read the holy word of God and the good laws of the colony." Every town of fifty families was required to maintain a school in which "reading and wrighting" should be taught. In every town of one hundred households a grammar school should be supported. As time went on the educational system underwent various changes, a new era opening with the establishment of the "Collegiate School" in 1700, which later became Yale College.

Many are the tales told of the little old schoolhouse or the New England primer from which the children learned how to spell. On Saturday morning the entire school was given over to the saying of the Shorter Catechism and the first question given was: "What is the chief end of man?" And then came the answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

The church of early Connecticut had a foremost place in shaping the life of the times. Just as it was responsible for the development of art, so was it central in the development

THE FORMER EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

THE FORMER INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

of the school system. The primary purpose of the early academy or college was to educate men to carry on the work of the church and to produce ministers. Connecticut may well be proud of her educational system and of what it has accomplished through the years.

In conclusion it may be said that the church was largely instrumental in shaping political developments within the state. This was true for the local town or village. Each town was originally and essentially a church congregation. Only church members in good standing were allowed to vote. The poor roads separating the various towns discouraged frequent travel so that each town tended to be a small republic in itself, to use the phrase of Odell Shepard. Some of the towns were founded because a few members could no longer bear to associate with the majority, due to theological differences. It is said that the church at Wethersfield has been the source of at least five separate towns. Local churches were therefore jealous of their prerogatives and developed along their own lines, loyal to their own convictions. Connecticut became a state of independent towns held together by the laws of the commonwealth.

Similarly it was a sermon of Thomas Hooker, preached May 31st, 1638, that laid down the principles upon which the state government was founded. It made the following points: 1. The choice of public magistrates belongs to the people by God's allowance. 2. The privilege of election must be exercised according to the will and law of God. 3. Those who have the power to appoint officers and magistrates have also the power to set the limitations of the power and place unto which they call them. Reasons for these principles include the foundation of authority as laid in the free consent of the people; by a free choice people will be more ready to

yield obedience; and because it is the duty of the people to carry out their responsibilities. In the sermon there was no reference to the British king nor sign of deference to any class. It was a call to the people to exercise their rights in accordance with the blessed will and law of God. Each citizen was to hold himself responsible to God alone.

CHAPTER TWO

Backgrounds of the Church

The roots of the church at Washington lie in Stratford and Woodbury. It was in the year 1639 that the Rev. Adam Blakeman with a small group of kindred souls settled in the place now called Stratford. There are no records available that tell of the organization of the Stratford church, prior to 1675. The early records were lost over two hundred years ago. There is ample circumstantial evidence, however, to warrant the assertion that the church began its existence in 1639. According to the records of the General Court in October, 1639, "Sergeant Nichols was assigned to train men and exercise them in military discipline." It would appear that Mr. Blakeman and his company had arrived from Wethersfield before the court order otherwise there would have been too few men to meet the conditions of the case.

Adam Blakeman was born in Staffordshire, England, in 1598 and had been a student in Christ's College, Oxford. Cotton Mather wrote of him as follows: "He was a useful preacher of the gospel in England. A desirable company of the faithful followed this 'holy man' from England." The

group came to Stratford via Wethersfield and the number was augmented by individuals from year to year.

Soon after arrival, a rude meeting-house was erected and was used for the settlement of affairs pertaining to both church and state. The community prospered. Mr. Blakeman's ministry continued until his death, September 7th, 1665. Of his writings only his "will" remains extant. Thomas Hooker has left the following testimony to Mr. Blakeman: "for the sake of the sacred and solemn simplicity of the discourse of this worthy man, if I might have my choice, I would choose to live and die under Mr. Blakeman's ministry." Mr. Blakeman was a member of the Synod during the period of 1646 to 1648 when it drew up the Cambridge platform. He lived at Sandy Hollow just west of the site of the first meeting-house.

In April, 1665, five months before the death of Mr. Blakeman, the town voted to call Rev. Israel Chauncey to help Mr. Blakeman in his ministry for a year. In the following June there was a general agreement among the people that Mr. Chauncey should be settled in the church as their regular pastor. His father was the President of Harvard College. Mr. Chauncey was born in Scituate, Massachusetts, in 1644, and graduated from Harvard in 1661. His studies included medicine and mathematics as well as theology. During the Narraganset war, he was a member of the council of the army. Mr. Chauncey's ministry of thirty-eight years was the longest in the history of the Stratford church. He had an active part in the founding of Yale College in 1701 and was chosen as the Rector of the institution but declined the honor on account of failing health.

From the early days of Mr. Chauncey's pastorate, theological differences developed among the people in the Strat-

ford church. The conflict apparently waged about the "Half-Way Covenant." This was a controversy that disturbed the theological peace of many Connecticut churches, including Hartford, Wethersfield and other places. It might be well to pause a moment and ask what was the "Half-Way Covenant?"

The theory of the New England churches was that membership should be restricted to those who could give proof of their conversion. Only such persons and their children might be baptized. There were others in the colony, however, who desired to follow the "parish-way" of the Church of England. This latter policy permitted the reception into the church of all persons of good character. The children of such persons could be baptized. Many of the children of the second generation of settlers could not give a satisfactory statement of their religious experience and as a result their children could not be presented for baptism. Therefore many people of excellent character had no standing in the churches and were deprived of political privileges.

In February, 1657, a ministerial council was called in Boston to consider this issue which was rapidly becoming a religious controversy and disturbing the spiritual unity of the settlements. Was it advisable to widen the door into the church? In spite of strong opposition, the decision of the council was to take a more liberal position and to allow baptized infants to "own the covenant" after arriving at mature years. Such persons became church members in a formal sense and their children were presented for baptism. It was a system of church membership upon a basis of morals rather than upon personal religious experience. In a sense, it introduced a dual type of membership into the church and thus was a departure from the Puritan theory of a covenant

church. Persons owning the covenant in the "half-way" sense had all religious privileges except that they were not to participate in the communion service.

Here was an easy method of building up church membership. In his "History of Ancient Woodbury" Cothren says that the "half-way" practice encouraged early baptism. Children were often baptized when only a week old. Young persons frequently did not own the covenant until they became parents and wished baptism for their children. In this manner a church could not run down in its membership so long as there were unconverted persons willing to own the covenant of baptism. In 1662 a Synod met in Boston and reaffirmed the Half-Way Covenant. In 1664 the General Court formally adopted the decision of the council and commended it to the churches. It was an arrangement that held definite political implications.

The first church at Stratford, however, was unwilling to adopt the practice although there were influential members who were in favor of it. Whereas in New Haven, only church members in full standing could share in the privileges of citizenship, in Stratford there was a group who advocated the Half-Way Covenant. The Stratford church was split upon this issue. When Mr. Chauncey was called there was opposition to him because of uncertainty as to where he stood in regard to this controversy. As events developed it became clear that he did not approve of the Half-Way practice.

From our standpoint, the efforts of the minority group to reach an amicable understanding appear to be sincere. Their letters to the pastor were expressed in respectful and kindly terms. The pastor and the majority group remained adamant in their determination not to introduce the Half-Way

practice into the Stratford church as a future policy. Mr. Chauncey himself had been settled at Stratford by the majority group and yet, according to the laws of the colony, the minority members were obliged to pay taxes for his support.

Unable to reach a satisfactory agreement, it was finally decided that each party should have its own minister and that the land set aside for the use of the minister should be divided. This decision was reached at a town meeting in Stratford on December 18, 1666. Early in 1668, the minority group secured the services of Rev. Zechariah Walker of Jamaica, Long Island, as their pastor.

Then there followed a controversy as to the use of the church property. Both groups had contributed their share toward the construction of the meeting-house. The first thought was that each pastor might preach at a given time to the two congregations joined together. This proposal was made to Mr. Chauncey but it was not approved. It was felt that the differences were too great to allow a common worship service. Each minister might touch upon forbidden topics, leading to further trouble. Therefore it was agreed that each group should use the common property but at different times. Mr. Walker was allowed two hours in which to hold his services during the middle of the day between the morning and afternoon services of Mr. Chauncey.

Friction continued and both groups petitioned the General Court in May, 1669, setting forth their grievances, the principal difficulty being the use of the meeting-house. The decision of the Court was that Mr. Walker and his group were to use the meeting-house for three hours in the middle of the day. Six months later the matter was again before the General Court and a resolution was passed urging joint

services. In response to this advice, the majority group sought to exclude Mr. Walker's group from all use of the building. This led to a proposal in 1670 by the minority group that the town should be divided into two parts so that they might live by themselves and avoid further dissension. Nothing came of this proposal. It was in this same year, May 5th, that Mr. Walker was ordained and a church covenant adopted.

The Covenant was as follows: "We whose names are hereunto subscribed, being (by the all-disposing providence of God, who determines the bounds of men's habitations) cast into cohabitation one with another, and being sensible of our duty unto God, and one to another, and of our liableness to be forgetful and neglectful of the one and the other, do hereby (for the further incitement of ourselves unto duty in either respect) solemnly give up ourselves and ours unto the Lord, engaging ourselves by his existing grace to walk before him in the religious observance of his revealed will, as far as it is or shall be made known unto us. We do also in the presence of God solemnly engage ourselves each to another, to walk together in church-society according to the rules of the gospel, jointly attending all the holy ordinances of God, as far as it shall please him to make way thereunto, and give opportunity thereof: and walking one with another in brotherly love, and Christian watchfulness, for our mutual edification and furtherance in the way to salvation. And jointly submitting ourselves and ours to the Government of Christ in his church, in the hand of such church governors or officers as shall be set over us according to gospel institution. The good Lord make us faithful in covenant with him and one with another, to walk as becomes a people near unto himself, accept of our offering of ourselves and ours unto him

and establish both us and them to be a people unto himself in his abundant mercy through Christ Jesus, who is our only mediator in whom alone we expect acceptance, justification and salvation; to him be glory and praise through all ages. Amen."

The following twenty male members of the church signed the Covenant: Zechariah Walker, Samuel Sherman, Joseph Judson, John Hurd, Nicholas Knell, Robert Clark, John Minor, Samuel Sherman, Jr., John Wheeler, Samuel Stiles, Hope Washburn, Hugh Griffin, Ephraim Stiles, John Thompson, Jr., Theophilus Sherman, Matthew Sherman, John Judson, Samuel Mills, Benjamin Stiles, Edmond Sherman. This number compares favorably with that of other churches at the time of their organization. Seven more names were added a few days later. Four men and six women were also added to the membership prior to the removal to Woodbury in 1672. More than a third of the above persons were members in accordance with the Half-Way Covenant system. Yet they subscribed to the above Covenant in fellowship with those who were in full communion. This practice survived in the Woodbury church until 1760 when it was abolished at the ordination of the third minister, Rev. Noah Benedict.

In 1672 it was finally decided, by permission of the General Court, that the second church should leave Stratford and seek a settlement of their own. The first members started up the Pootatuck River, being directed to the Pomperaug River, up which they were to travel eight miles. Reaching the Pomperaug they felt it was too small and therefore went on to the Shepaug. They traveled up the Shepaug as far as what is now Roxbury. Returning eastward they found themselves on Good Hill where, to quote the historian, "they per-

ceived the valley of the Pomperaug lying below in solitude and silence."

In connection with this journey, Rev. J. A. Freeman relates the following incident: "Deacon John Minor who was the leader fell on his knees, leading the little band of hardy adventurers in prayer, invoking the blessing of heaven upon their enterprise, and praying that their posterity might be an upright and godly people to the latest generation." The Woodbury church thus had its inception in a strong faith in God and in his promises. It was in a spirit of prayer that they began their life in the Pomperaug Valley. It is said that there was a Bethel rock where they loved to go for the purposes of meditation and communion with God.

Mr. Walker ministered to the members of his church who were located in both Stratford and Woodbury until 1678 when he went to Woodbury to reside permanently. After the settlement of Woodbury, Mr. Walker and Mr. Chauncey settled all their differences and the two churches remained on the most friendly terms.

It is said that Mr. Walker was a man of solid learning and a powerful preacher. He was familiar with Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and proficient in the cardinal doctrines of theology. He was greatly beloved by the people under his charge and conducted the affairs of the church with wisdom and discretion. During his pastorate the new settlement grew rapidly and became prosperous. A hundred and eight persons were admitted to church membership during his ministry. Three hundred and seventy-six persons received baptism. After a life of useful and faithful service, Mr. Walker passed away January 31, 1700, and was laid to rest in the southern part of the ancient burying-ground.

After his death, the church was without the services of a

pastor for a time. Rev. Anthony Stoddard, who had become a licentiate in 1700, was asked to supply the pulpit. His ministry pleased the people and they proceeded to have him ordained and settled as their regular pastor, in 1702. Mr. Chauncey assisted at the ordination service. The town voted him a salary of seventy pounds a year and also made a generous settlement of land. The salary was to be paid in provisions, an illustration of the scarcity of currency. The contract was quickly carried into effect and a residence was built. The parson's study was on the second floor, where he prepared his sermons for a period of fifty-eight years. On the first floor of the building the probate courts of the Woodbury district were held for more than forty years.

The length of Mr. Stoddard's pastorate stamped him as an unusual leader and this fact was demonstrated by his great versatility. In addition to his pastoral duties, he acted at times as a lawyer, physician, counselor, friend and community leader. Life was difficult and hazardous. For many years around the old parsonage there were palisades as a defense against Indians. Yet in spite of difficulties and dangers, the community prospered and the church grew. It is said that there were only two years during Mr. Stoddard's ministry when people were not admitted to church membership. There were several seasons of special interest in religion when revivals took place, such as the years 1726, 1727, and the year of the "Great Sickness." With other churches in the colony, the Woodbury church participated in the "Great Awakening" which started in 1734, under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton. This religious movement swept through the churches of the New England colonies and left its mark upon the lives of the people.

The church at Woodbury became a mother of churches, four other churches being organized during the ministry of Mr. Stoddard. The church at Southbury was organized in 1730, that of Bethlehem in 1739, the church in Judea in 1741, and the church at Roxbury in 1743. All of these churches prospered and eventually became communities.

CHAPTER THREE

Establishing the Church

We are indebted to the Rev. Ebenezer Porter for information concerning the early days of the church. He felt that such information would be of great value to future generations and therefore made inquiries of the oldest inhabitants of the town. He begins his book of records with these words: "To my successors in the special charge of this church, these records, revised and transcribed with considerable labor, are dedicated. That this church may ever consist of pious, prayerful, watchful, shining Christians and that this dear flock may ever be blessed with a succession of able, evangelical, faithful ministers, is the devout prayer of your predecessor and brother in the holy ministry." Ebenezer Porter.

In 1735 a few families left the village of Woodbury and settled in the northern part of the town, about nine miles away. The new settlement was along a ridge about a mile southeast of the Green and was given the name of Judea. (It was in the section known as the North Purchase and had been bought from the Indians in 1710.) Mr. Turner quotes the following note by Dr. Porter: "The first settlement in

this society was made by Joseph Hurlbut, a little east of where Samuel Frisbee now lives. Esq. Moseley lived near John Smith's present habitation, Nathaniel Durkee near Samuel Clark's, John Baker near Benjamin Hine's new house, Capt. Weekes near Capt. Smith's, Joseph Gillette near Sherman Brinsmade's. Samuel Pitcher lived about half a mile south from Judge Brinsmade's."

The first house was built in 1735. Other houses followed. In her excellent history of the "Ecclesiastical Society of Judea," Mrs. A. C. Titus lists some of the early settlers of Washington as follows: "From Stratford came the Calhouns, Weeks, Bells, and some of the Bakers, Hazens, Armstrongs and Durkees. From Lebanon the Rices. From Guilford the Burgesses, Chittendons, Hobsons and Parmelees. From Branford, the Frisbies and George Baldwin's family. From Milford the Camps, Nettletons, Farrands, Hines, Powells, Clark (Samuel and William) Bryans, Gunns, Fords, Baldwins, John Smith and Plumbs. From Middletown came the Warners and Deacon Clark's family, Woodruffs, Allen Curtis and David. From East Haven came the Goodsells. From Preston came the Averills and Cogswells. From Waterbury came Joseph Hurlbut. From Seaconk came the Tituses. From England came the Davies. From Voluntown came the Loggans. From Suffield came the Nortons and Jona and Noah Smith. From Wallingford came the Duttons, Parkers, Twists and Hawleys. From Southbury came the Hickoxes."

For several years following the settlement of Judea, the people continued to attend church in the village of Woodbury. This meant a trip of eighteen miles each Sabbath. In winter this was a great hardship. Therefore after four years, the small group of families decided to petition the General

Assembly in May, 1739, asking for a separate ecclesiastical society. This petition stated that they lived "full eight miles from the meeting-house and their wives and children had to tarry at home from the worship of God about half of the year."

A second petition in 1741, signed by twenty-six individuals, again requested their own ecclesiastical society and appointed "Our Trusty and well-beloved friend, Friend Weeks, agent and attorney to prosecute our Petition." It was signed by Nathaniel Durkee, John Baker, Joseph Gillette, Joseph Chittendon, Elisha Stone, Samuel Pitcher, Jr., James Pitcher, Increase Moseley, Lemuel Baker, Daniel Castle, Samuel Branton, Ezra Terrill, Jr., Ebenezer Allen, Zadock Clark, Elijah Hurd, Joseph Hurd, Joseph Hurlbut, Benjamin Ingraham, Jr., Robert Durkee, Samuel Bell, Jonah Titus, Benjamin Ingraham, John Royce, John Hurd, Jr., Jedediah Hurd, Benjamin Hinman. The petition was granted and the new territory thus incorporated was named "Judea." Another petition asked that a land tax of 30 shillings per lot be established and this was granted for 4 years.

The first meeting of the society was held at the house of Mr. John Baker in December, 1741. At that meeting the following officers were chosen: Friend Weeks, Treasurer; Increase Moseley, Society clerk; Friend Weeks, Joseph Chittendon and Samuel Hurlbut, Society Committee; Increase Moseley, John Baker and Joseph Gillette, Ministerial Committee.

The society lost no time in its task of organization and in the effort to secure a minister. The following week it was voted to send for a minister "to preach ye gospel" and it was also voted "to choose a committee among ourselves to find

ye center of ye society of Judea and to set a stake for a meeting-house."

The first preaching service of the new society was held in the home of Joseph Hurlbut, one room being able to accommodate the people even though it is stated that "none staid at home in those times who were able to attend." The preacher was a Mr. Baldwin from Litchfield, later a clerk of the County Court.

At a society meeting in the house of Joseph Gillette on the 29th of June, 1742, a special committee was chosen to confer with Mr. Reuben Judd who had received the call to be pastor of the church. The wording of the call is as follows: "We ye subscribers pursuant to ye vote of ye inhabitants of Judea as thereunto appointed, do earnestly entreat and beseech ye worthy Mr. Reuben Judd to settle with us in ye work of ye gospel ministry and take ye pastoral charge of ye souls of us and ours."

Mr. Judd accepted the call and was ordained in an outdoor service near the home of Samuel Pitcher on September 1st, 1742. That was the date for the official organization of the church, consisting of thirteen men and ten women. With one exception, their names are recorded, as follows: Deacon Increase Moseley, Deacon Joseph Hurd, John Baker, Joseph Gillette, Allen Curtis, Joseph Chittendon, Elijah Hurd, Benjamin Hurd, James Hurd, John Royce, Samuel Broughton, Samuel Bell, Deborah Moseley, Ann Hurd, Rachel Weeks, Jerusha Baker, Abigail Hurd, Tabitha Hurd, Dorcas Royce, Mary Durkee, Esther Durkee.

In less than four years, forty-seven additional members were added to the church, making a total membership of seventy, received during the ministry of Mr. Judd. Eighty-

EBENEZER PORTER

MINISTER

1795–1811

STEPHEN MASON

MINISTER

1818–1828

one baptisms were recorded in the same period of approximately five years.

Considering the times, the settlement arrangement for Mr. Judd was of a generous nature. In those days two provisions were made for a minister. There was the question of salary and there was the matter of a dwelling place. It was the usual practice for a minister to be given a parcel of land and to have a house built for his use by the members of the church and society. Such a settlement was not only for the use of the minister while performing his duties as pastor but it became his private property. Naturally the minister became attached to his own house and land. Nor would the members of a church feel able to finance a minister's settlement every few years. The cost was prohibitive. It is not surprising, therefore, that there were long pastorates in the early days of the New England churches.

The society made the following arrangement with Mr. Judd. They voted him three hundred and eighty pounds to be paid in land or in money as follows: One hundred pounds to be paid in 1743, one hundred pounds to be paid in 1744, and one hundred pounds to be paid in 1745, and eighty pounds in 1746. In regard to the salary the following resolution was passed: "We will give to ye worthy Mr. Reuben Judd one hundred pounds by ye year the first four years from 1742, and the next five years following to add ten pounds a year." One notes in passing that this arrangement with Mr. Judd was of such a nature that it may have handicapped their efforts to secure a meeting-house. Mr. Turner says that Mr. Judd's salary exceeded that of any of his successors for a hundred years.

According to the Ecclesiastical Society records, the Judea Society met once a month. A moderator was chosen for each

meeting. There was also a collector who had charge of the funds, and a committee of three who were authorized to act on behalf of the society in any emergency.

No sooner had the Ecclesiastical Society become organized than there arose a persistent effort to construct a suitable building where the people might gather for divine worship. On April 14th, 1742, it was unanimously voted "that there was want of a meeting-house in Judea." The meeting was held at the house of Joseph Gillette and from there the people went to inspect the place agreed upon as the best site for the meeting-house. Deacon Samuel Miner was chosen as the one to arrange all the details in regard to the place chosen. Captain Knowles was chosen as the one to establish the boundary between Bethlehem and Judea. Then there came a vote to build a log meeting-house, twenty-five feet long and twenty feet wide. Nothing came of it. Several months later, September 22, 1742, it was voted "to build a frame meeting-house, thirty feet long, twenty-six feet wide, and an eighteen foot post, to be raised by the 25th of November next." Nathaniel Durkee, Friend Weeks and Joseph Gillette were appointed to oversee the work of building. This vote also was followed by inaction.

At a subsequent meeting the following minute was made: "At said meeting there was much discourse about the building of a meeting-house, but none to purpose as to the building of it by the society. Then several men subscribed to build a house upon their own charge that might answer for the present in the place of a meeting-house, and it was voted by the society that the men who subscribed should have liberty to set said house on ye plot of land that was laid out to set a meeting-house on." The place chosen was a little northwest of the present location of the church on the Green.

The work on this new building was brought to a successful conclusion as attested by the following resolution: "Voted to accept of ye Eight Partners house to use as a Meeting-House so long as it will comfortably hold ye inhabitants." Nathaniel Durkee was commissioned to finish the interior of the building, such as the making of the seats, the doors and the pulpit. Another resolution called for a blue plush cushion, presumably for the minister's use. It was also voted that "the Society's Treasurer take care of ye sweeping of ye Meeting-House for ye ensuing year." Apparently the order of service was of a very simple nature as it is recorded that "ye worthy Mr. Reuben Judd shall order ye singing of hymns at any time when he thinks it convenient and proper."

The ministers' arrangements were not the only responsibility of the youthful settlement. There were roads to be built, surveys to be made, taxes to be levied, local militia to be organized, schools to be established and similar measures to be put into effect. It was voted to build a bridge over the Shepaug River and all were taxed for the project, some paying their share in work on the bridge. The militia was probably established in 1744, as the records begin to use military titles at that time, such as Lieutenant John Baker, Sergeant Nathaniel Durkee and Corporal Robert Durkee. From 1744 on, there are references to annual appointments on the school committee although there is little information given about the schools. In her excellent historical summary of the Society of Judea, Mrs. A. C. Titus speaks of two ancient school records now kept for safe keeping in the Town Hall. One record is "The First School Society's Meetings of Washington" and the other is a notebook kept by the various clerks in the Church Hill district. In the records there is a reference to the recovery of lost cattle by the erection of a pound

on the highway near Sergeant Gillette's house. In the year 1746 there are also references to the parsonage grounds and to the laying out of highways.

Apparently all was not smooth sailing between the pastor and the people. Money was scarce and it was not easy to meet all their obligations in terms of cash. Two years after the settlement it was therefore voted that "ye worthy Mr. Reuben Judd's salary for the future shall be paid in grain by those that see cause to pay in grain. In wheat at 12 shillings per bushel, Indian corn at six shillings per bushel, oats at four shillings per bushel."

Just what the misunderstanding was between Mr. Judd and the members of the church is not clear. In 1744 a committee of four was appointed to confer with Mr. Judd concerning his desire to terminate his ministry in Judea. After the committee brought back their report, another committee of three was elected to confer with neighboring ministers as to the best course for the society to take. The Rev. Ebenezer Porter has left the following comment: "The Rev. Reuben Judd continued in the pastorate here about five years. From writings that remain, his character and the occasion of his dismission do not distinctly appear." It is recorded that the society paid Mr. Judd over seven hundred pounds for his house and farm.

Mr. Judd was followed by Rev. John Searl who only remained a year. It is stated in the meeting of July, 1747, that the inhabitants by a unanimous vote signified their desire to have the worthy Mr. John Searl continue to preach the Gospel in Judea. Two months later the society voted to send Captain Friend Weeks to the General Assembly Meeting in New Haven with the request that they be released from paying country rates for a time. At a meeting in December,

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1747, a unanimous call was given to Mr. John Searl to settle as their minister. They also voted to give him five pounds old tenor money for each Sabbath he preached. It was voted to give him seven hundred pounds old tenor money for a settlement and to pay it in five years, namely: one hundred and fifty pounds a year for the four following years and one hundred pounds the last year.

One incident concerning Mr. Searl's pastorate is given in Mr. Porter's notebook as follows: "while Mr. Searl was preaching against vain recreations, a man rose from his seat contemptuously and walked out of the meeting-house. After a moment's pause, and while he was still in the house the preacher spoke to this effect, 'Perhaps you may not have another opportunity to come to the sanctuary, but I leave it with the Great God.' The man went home, sickened in a few days and died."

In the society records, there is the following interesting item: "April the 7th, A. D. 1747; this may certify that Mr. Joseph Hurlbut professes himself of the Church of England and puts himself under my pastoral care, signed, John Beach, missionary." This would indicate that an Episcopal missionary had been traveling through the country settlements, carrying on a work of ministering to the sick and preaching the Gospel and adding converts to the Church of England.

Mr. Searl only remained about a year and probably left because of a misunderstanding concerning the settlement, as one resolution states: "Voted to try whether the worthy Mr. John Searl will abate in his settlement and salary." For that purpose a special committee was appointed but the committee was evidently unsuccessful. In August of 1748 there was a resolution "granting to Capt. Weeks fifteen pounds

old tenor money for boarding Mr. Searl and keeping his horse." At the same meeting it was voted "that all our voting in society meeting for the future shall be done by holding up the hand or dividing the house." In December of 1748 the pulpit was again vacant and a special committee was chosen to arrange for the preaching services.

The people who established the Judea Ecclesiastical Society and church were a hardy folk. They were willing and ready to cope with the hardships that were their daily lot. They loved their freedom and, above all, their freedom of conscience. They were a people of keen intelligence, insistent that their children should be sent to school. And they were a people who had qualities of leadership and of statesmanship. They were entirely capable of setting out for themselves and creating a self-governing community.

One name, for example, that frequently appears in the early records is that of Increase Moseley. He was a member of various committees and early established a place of natural leadership. With his family, he settled in the Judea Settlement about 1740, coming from Norwich. They were thus charter members of both the society and the church. Increase Moseley must have been recognized from the beginning as a man of more than ordinary character and ability. Although only thirty years of age, he was chosen the first deacon of the church. He was also the first Captain of Militia. He became a justice of the peace and as early as 1751 was chosen by the town of Woodbury as one of its two representatives in the General Assembly. He was re-elected many times to this office, serving in upwards of thirty sessions, including the Revolutionary War period.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Colonial Era

In September, 1748, the following resolution was passed: "Voted by a clear vote to hire ye worthy Mr. Daniel Brinsmade to preach ye gospel among us till ye first Tuesday in December next." This was quickly followed by another resolution: "Voted to give ye worthy Mr. Daniel Brinsmade a call to ye work of ye gospel ministry in Judea." A generous settlement of eight hundred pounds was provided. There was one stipulation made, however, concerning the settlement. If he should forsake his faith or the work of the gospel ministry he must return the amount of the settlement to the society. Otherwise he was at liberty to sell or deed away his home in case he left the pastorate of the church. This arrangement was put in the form of a covenant.

It was expressed as follows: "Daniel Brinsmade being applied to by the Society's Committee of Judea that they might know upon what considerations he will return back part or ye whole settlement voted for him by ye inhabitants of ye said Judea, in case he should forsake the work of ye gospel ministry in Presbyterian orders among them, his answer is as follows: If he change his principles from ye Pres-

byterian to Episcopalian, or in any other way in which himself alone shall be the blamable cause of forfeiting ye work of ye gospel ministry in ye above said Judea, and shall finally desist therefrom, he will oblige himself to return ye above settlement to ye above society when he has deducted out of the said settlement the salary due. But if Providence removes him from ye work of ye ministry in Judea, none of the above reasons being the cause of his remove, then the above said settlement to remain his and his heirs forever, he living and dying in ye ministry and in ye above said Judea in Woodbury." The document was signed by Mr. Brinsmade and on behalf of the society by Jonathan Smith, Lemuel Baker and Elijah Hurd.

It may not be amiss to say a word here about the background of Mr. Brinsmade. He was born in Stratford, July 31, 1718. We know little of his early life save that he was graduated from Yale in 1745. His great-grandfather, John Brinsmade, with his wife Mary, had settled in Stratford about 1642, having come there via Charlestown, Massachusetts. Both the grandfather and the father bore the name Daniel so that Mr. Brinsmade was the third to bear that name in a direct succession.

No sooner had the settlement been made between Mr. Brinsmade and the church than it "voted that ye 9th of February, 1749, shall be a day of fasting, preparatory to ye ordination of ye worthy Mr. Daniel Brinsmade." It was also voted "that Wednesday, March 1st, 1749 be the day for his ordination for ye work of ye ministry in Judea. And Captain Friend Weeks, Lieutenant John Baker, Sargeant Abraham Hurd, were chosen a committee to call a council of elders and messengers to ordain ye worthy Mr. Daniel Brinsmade."

Mr. Brinsmade proposed the following confession of faith and it was adopted by the church: "Do you believe the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners? Do you judge the Catechism of the Assembly of Divines that is in common use among us, as far as you understand it, as agreeable to the Word of God?" Then follows the Apostles' Creed.

It was not long before Mr. Brinsmade and the church determined to build a permanent meeting-house in place of the temporary building. There were many resolutions passed in society meetings covering the securing of material and plans for the work. For example, we find resolutions like the following: "Voted that Captain Friend Weeks, David Judson, John Baker and Sargeant Samuel Baker be a committee to take care and procure roof-boards, and short shingles and clapboards for covering the meeting-house we have voted to build." "Voted to choose a committee to go to Kent to procure white pine timbers and shingles to cover meeting-house. David Foote and Elnathan Mitchell were chosen committee for that end." Later on it was voted to frame and erect the meeting-house. It was also decided that "all the inhabitants of said Judea shall have liberty at ye framing the said meeting-house, and each man's wages per day to be 15 shillings old tenor, in case that each day they work they appear at the frame and begin their work by sun half an hour high in ye morning."

The work must have progressed rather slowly as the society and the pastor together were given the authority to employ Mr. Stiles of Southbury or any other good workman to frame the meeting-house. It was voted that a committee should make arrangements for the raising of the meeting-house, adding, "said committee shall have their pay in money

of ye said society, ye first day after ye said raising and for all ye strong drink that they provide for said raising."

In the year 1754 the building was ready for use, though not fully completed. A sexton was provided for in the following resolution: "that the sum of three pounds five shillings be paid to George for sweeping the meeting-house in said Judea and keeping the keys; seasonably locking the doors and shutting the windows of said house during the ensuing year." Evidently George was not on the job for he was soon supplanted and another resolution passed "to grant the money to David Royce to engage him to sweep ye meeting-house and shut ye doors thereof sufficiently the ensuing year."

Mr. Brinsmade kept a faithful record of his duties in connection with the church. During his ministry a hundred and thirty persons were admitted into membership. Three hundred and six persons received baptism. He performed a good many marriages, sometimes as many as fifteen in a single year. Ethan Allen of Revolutionary fame came to him to be married, the entry reading: "Ethan Allen of Cornwall and Mary Brownson of Roxbury were married June 23, 1762 —four shillings." It was Mr. Brinsmade's habit to enter the fee he received from each marriage. On marrying the son of a deacon of his church, Abisha Moseley, to Lois Dutton, he remarked: "I did not accept a fee from him because his father was a deacon."

The baptismal records give us information about Mr. Brinsmade's family. Together with his will, they are our chief source of first hand information. We know that about the time he came to Judea he married Rhoda Sherman of New Haven and that he had two sons and two daughters. The baptism of these children is entered in the church regis-

ter. For example, there is this entry: "January 19th. Then baptized my own son Daniel, who was born November 16th, 1751, on Saturday at just about ten o'clock in ye morning." This entry is followed by a line of characters to indicate the stars active at that particular date. This would imply that Mr. Brinsmade had an active interest in astrology. In the baptismal record of each of his children, he cast the horoscope and entered the appropriate symbols. At the birth of his second son, he entered the following record: "Then baptized my own son, Daniel Sherman Brinsmade, who was born January 11th, 1755, Saturday, about 12 o'clock in the day. On ye same day there was a tedious storm of rain and snow."

Mr. Brinsmade had rather unique ideas concerning the names of children and did not hesitate to use a good name more than once. Each son received the family name of Daniel while the two daughters were named respectively Rebeka Rhoda and Rhoda Rebeka. Both daughters died at a tender age, one at the age of seven months and the other at the age of four years. In those days there was the quaint custom of calling little girls by the title of "Mistress." An inscription on a tombstone in the old cemetery on Plum Hill is as follows: "Here lyes ye body of Mistress Rhoda Rebecca, daughter of ye Revd. Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Rhoda Brinsmade, who died Dec. ye 30th, 1762 in ye 7th month of her age."

The members of the church took their church life seriously. It was not a frivolous era. In case of conduct unbecoming a church member, they were not averse to meting out discipline. At a church meeting on May 17, 1751, it was voted "that if any member of ye church of Christ in Judea shall tolerate frolicing in his own house, or shall assist to carry on a frolic in any place; ye same persons shall be deemed offenders by this church and shall be subject to be

dealt with by this church as offenders in a gospel way." The above vote was reviewed at a later meeting and the pastor made the following proposals to the church: "First, whether they are not of ye mind that to act as I now shall point out is contrary to scripture. For men especially in their own societies to spend their time at ye tavern in drinking, laughing, jesting, joking, bantering, venturing of wagers, running out against one another, speaking evil of others, gossiping and the like and for persons when together to spend their time in singing and dancing and things of ye like nature. Whether these things are not contrary to scripture which forbids living after the flesh, Romans 8:13, and which condemns chambering and wantonness, Romans 13:13, and exhorts young people to be sober minded."

"And to shun all appearance of evil, 1 Thess. 5:23, and teaches us to pray that we be not led into temptation, Mtt. 6:13, and requires us to give up ourselves wholly to God and to his service, Rom. 12:1. And to do all things whatsoever we do to ye glory of God, 1 Cor. 10:31, and urges us to be spiritually minded and condemns ye carnal mind to death, Rom. 8:6. And teaches us to lay up our treasures in heaven, Mtt. 6:20. And to set our affections on things above and not on things on ye earth, Col. 3:2. Foolish talking and jesting let it not be once named among you, Eph. 5:3-4, and speak not evil one of another, James 4:11."

These admonitions were not a dead letter. They were to be acted upon, as will be seen in the following incident. On Aug. 9, 1752, information was brought to the church by two members to the effect that a third member of the church "was complained of as being guilty of the violation of the fifth commandment and also as having said that he looked upon

ye pastor of this church as no minister of Christ and that this church was no church of Christ."

On the 10th of August the individual in question was asked to appear on the 19th to answer the charges. He did not appear on the 19th. Whereupon a committee of two was appointed to interview him and inquire as to why he had not come. Another meeting took place on August 26th, also without the attendance of the offending brother. The charges against him were publicly read, the evidence in support of the charges were also read and examined and the following resolution was adopted: "Brethren, if it be in your minds that ....., a member of this church, by the evidence given in, be proved guilty according to the charge of scandalous breach of the fifth commandment, by a contemptuous carriage toward your reverend pastor and opposing him in the execution of his office as a public reprover, and that continuing impenitent he ought to be laid under suspension and admonition and in case of continued obstinacy in him and after a suitable exercise of patience in this church toward him, he ought to be laid under the last and highest censure, a proper means of divine appointment for his recovery by repentance."

The offending brother not being repentant, the following admonition was adopted at a church meeting on Feb. 8, 1753, at the conclusion of the afternoon preaching service: "Forasmuch as ....., a member of this church, has sometime since been complained of as guilty of a scandalous breach of ye fifth commandment, and at a meeting of this church the evidence was examined and he was voted guilty according to the charge of a breach of ye fifth commandment and of contemptuous behavior toward our pastor in opposing him in ye execution of his office. Foras-

much as .... has all along showed a stubbornness of spirit in refusing to appear, and has, since the charge was first exhibited against him, pretended to take refuge in another communion, and so renounced ours, all of which we look upon as evidence of continued impenitence, and ye Lord Jesus Christ having appointed in his church censures for the unruly, yet making it our duty to restore with ye spirit of meekness, we would therefore with obedience to Christ, yet with Christian compassion, solemnly admonish our brother to consider his conduct which has been so scandalous and to repent of the evil and return to his duty, lest by his obstinacy he oblige the church to pronounce the last and greatest censure, but above all, lest a just and Holy God shut him eternally out of the Kingdom of Heaven."

It was the custom in those days to have church services both on Sunday morning and in the afternoon. Many people lived at a distance and it was not possible to go home between sessions. The meeting-house was not heated and many people must have suffered from cold. Gideon Hollister conceived the idea of building a small house not far from the church where his family and friends were able to eat their lunches in comfort and keep warm. The question was put to the society and its approval was secured. The idea became popular and others were also given the privilege of building such Sabba-Day houses. The foundation of one of these houses was unearthed about sixty years ago near the Brownley stables. With the building of homes near the Green, there was no further necessity for the Sabba-Day houses.

In the minds of the people, Sunday was perhaps the most important day of the week. Early in the morning boys arrived at the Sabba-Day houses to build fires. The families

came later and were summoned to worship by the sound of a conch shell, blown by the sexton. The church was intensely cold and therefore the women carried huge muffs. Both men and women warmed their feet on heated stones in bags. Sometimes there were dogs crouching in the pews but this was later forbidden.

Conditions of life were such that the church service necessarily had an air of informality. Clothing was simple and varied. Perhaps a farmer would enter eating an apple, whistle to his dog, and settle down for a nap. It is said that one of the Judea parishioners used to travel to church barefoot, until his wife "made a fuss about it" and provided him with socks for the Sabbath day. On the next Sunday morning the old man tarried at the door of the church to don the troublesome foot-wear, then followed his wife noisily to their pew.

The seating arrangement in the church required considerable thought and planning. As early as 1761 there were ushers who seated the members in accordance with specific instructions. The married folk were separated from those who were unmarried. One resolution was as follows: "Voted that the Meeting-House be seated by age, and that James Logan, Samuel Baker and Jabez Warner be added to the present seaters, to collect the ages and determine the seats of inhabitants of the Society." The committee chosen to seat young married folks and newcomers consisted of David Royce, Ebenezer Pitcher, Joseph Calhoun, Robert Durkee and William Hopson.

In those early days the seats were square, like small box stalls. It is said that all seats were furnished with sawdust and there might be a strip of carpet here and there for women worshipers. We have heard that there was sometimes

a little box at the bottom for the benefit of those who desired to expectorate during the service. There were not many negroes in the community but for those few who desired to attend church there was a special seat reserved. It is also said that during the early days there was a front pew reserved for bride and groom. Newly-wedded couples would be found there on their first Sunday at church.

A familiar phrase in use at that time was "dignifying the seats and pews." The people voted to dignify the seats and pews in the gallery, appointing Thomas Dutton, Samuel Dutton and Gideon Hollister for that purpose. Presumably they carried long rods and used them if necessary in order that every one might keep awake and attentive.

The music of the church for many years was under the direction of Esq. Increase Moseley who was empowered to "tune ye Psalms." Since no place had been assigned to a choir, it was voted "to give so much of the gallery to the singers as the singers think necessary for them to take in order for them to perform properly that part of the worship."

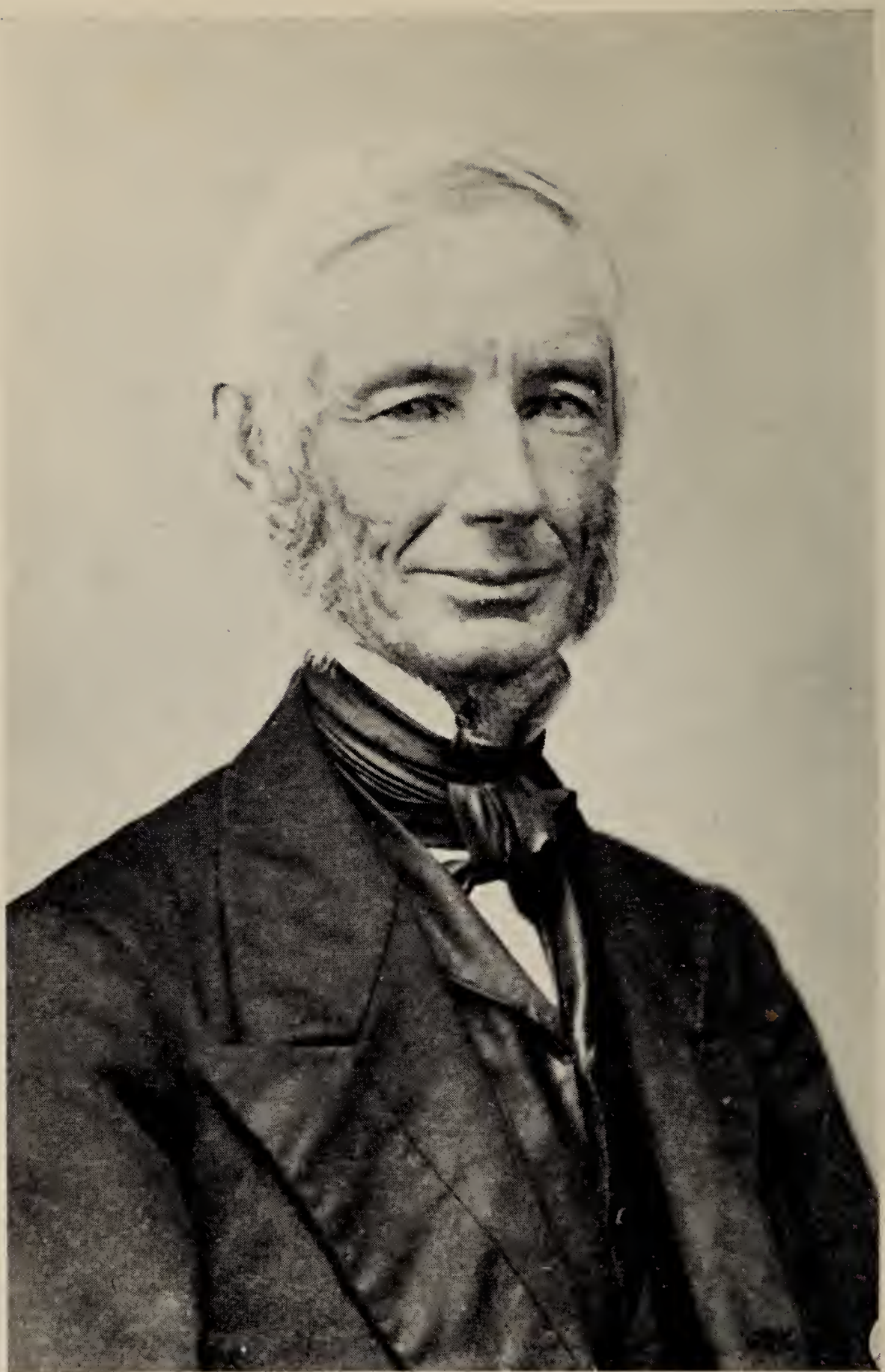
From time to time there were improvements made in the church building. On such occasions the money was secured by taxing the people in order that the work might be done. The floors were laid and a railing provided for the gallery. Also arrangements were made "for decent steps to ye doors of said house." Money left over was to be used for a pall for coffins at burial services.

Mr. Brinsmade was a man of strong convictions and great strength of character. He preached Christian truth as he believed it. It was a day when the average church member also held decided views of a theological nature. It is not surprising, therefore, that Mr. Brinsmade had his differences

GORDON HAYES

MINISTER

1829–1851



SAMUEL W. POND

with his people. Mr. Porter, who succeeded him in the pulpit, writes as follows: "The want of union so common to new societies, and Mr. Brinsmade's conscientious and inflexible attachment to the doctrines of pure Christianity, occasioned him some difficulties early in his ministry." These difficulties must have continued through the years until, at the outbreak of the Revolution, we are told they reached a climax, when most of the congregation became dissatisfied with their minister. It is said, however, that "no heresy or scandal was alleged against him." Little is known of the true causes of these intermittent disagreements. No doubt the "Half-Way Covenant System" was one factor. This system was abolished in Judea a few years after Mr. Brinsmade's ordination.

The following incident throws some light on the periodic misunderstandings between pastor and people. At a church meeting on March 1st, 1753, a letter was presented to the church by Abraham Hurd, asking that he be allowed to resign from the church. On April 11th, the church replied that the members did not understand his reasons and requested him to appear before the church at a convenient time and explain them. A committee of two members was sent to him to discuss the matter and he expressed his willingness to come at any time. Nothing came of it for several months and then, on December 10th, he was cited to appear on the 19th of December and explain himself.

In his letter there were three criticisms of Mr. Brinsmade. "First, that Mr. Brinsmade says ye person before he comes to Christ has ye heart of stone taken away and ye heart of flesh given. Second, that Mr. Brinsmade says that there is no spiritual meaning to scripture. Third, that Mr. Brinsmade denies a particular faith."

On December 19th, 1753, a church meeting was held at

the house of Mr. Brinsmade. Mr. Bellamy of Bethlehem was present and was asked to act as moderator. Abraham Hurd appeared and explained the points raised in his paper. After the issue had been fully considered, the following resolutions were proposed and passed: "1. Does it appear that our brother Hurd has given up all ye objections alleged in his paper against Mr. Brinsmade's doctrines? Voted in ye affirmative unanimously. 2. Does it appear that his objections respecting negative power in ye minister and ye want of a Church Covenant are wholly groundless? Voted in ye affirmative. 3. Does it appear that he has any just reasons according to ye Gospel to desire a dismission from his church? Voted in ye negative unanimously. 4. Whereas Abraham Hurd is very desirous of a dismission from this church and it being a case very unusual, the church agree to defer ye matter to ye next Association of this County for their advice as to what is proper in the matter in such a case."

One of the most interesting of the papers that have come down through the years deals in detail with the controversy which broke out on April 26th, 1779. The following resolutions were drawn up at that time: "The Society of Judea being many of them dissatisfied with their pastor, Rev. Daniel Brinsmade, had a general conference in which they appointed a committee to lay their grievances before him, which are the following: 1. They think he does not visit the people of his charge as a minister ought to do. 2. They think his time too much taken up with secular affairs to the neglect of his duties. 3. His insisting on a fulfillment of the covenant entered into between the society and their pastor with regard to his salary established on wheat, notwithstanding the great scarcity of it at this time. 4. They think it does not appear that he bears his equal proportion towards defraying the

charges of the present war. 5. His retaining the whole of his interest in his own hands, notwithstanding his sons are of age. 6. Many think he requires a greater price for articles that he sells than is the common price in the society. 7. His preaching so much on political subjects which seems to indicate a great degree of worldly-mindedness. The above grievances the society in general think are great obstacles in the way of his being of much service to them and unless he can make them appear groundless, they think they have just reason for their dissatisfaction."

That Mr. Brinsmade had a mind of his own is evident from his following reply to the above resolutions: "I know of not one man in the society who will say that these articles are well grounded. So far as any of the church or society will appear to prove the fact alleged in the articles of grievance, I stand ready to join with them in calling a council to hear and determine by the Laws of Christ Jesus the whole affair, and if it shall appear that I have done amiss, I will confess and reform and the same shall be expected of you."

It is clear that Mr. Brinsmade had his supporters and one document, signed by several members, urged the society to redeem their pledge to their pastor. Among the points they raised were the following: "1. By the laws of God, we are bound to fulfill the covenant, Rom. 13:7. 2. If we revoke the covenant it will prove that we have acted hypocritically. 3. Because we are bound by the laws of this state to fulfill the contract. 4. Because by carrying on a controversy with our minister we shall spend more time and money than would pay his salary and after all we cannot avoid paying the whole of it anyway. 5. Because if we go on in this way no other minister can safely trust us or in prudence settle among us. 6. Because if we disqualify ourselves to settle a minister, we

shall escape to be an orderly society and to avail a character that shall effect our ruin. 7. Because our present minister offers us what we may settle another minister."

Another member also wrote the society's committee on behalf of Mr. Brinsmade urging that the pastor be given his full salary. "A neglect from year to year to pay our minister is to his injury and to our dishonor. Let us without delay do justice to our minister that dishonor may not be fixed on the character of the inhabitants of this society."

These salary difficulties were evidently due to the fact that by 1770, Mr. Brinsmade's salary had dropped from seventy-five pounds to sixty pounds. Instead of firewood being a free-will offering, "it was voted that eight pounds be granted for to engage him to get his own firewood." Apparently at one time there was a thought of not paying him any salary at all. At one time when disagreement was acute, it was arranged that if he would resign at the end of the year, a certain sum would be paid him. The money was paid but the minister refused to resign on the ground that the society still owed him a considerable sum.

The story is told that in a certain year of great difficulty, after very strenuous efforts, Mr. Brinsmade succeeded in collecting the whole of his salary. He had had to speak of the matter from the pulpit more than once. Having secured the salary, Mr. Brinsmade voluntarily returned a portion of it, saying that it was the keeping of pledged agreements and not the money itself that he had been working for.

The disagreements finally ended in a council, called in 1784, which settled all matters amicably. Rev. Noah Merwin of Torrington was invited to come and work with Mr. Brinsmade as his colleague. Mr. Merwin was clearly a man of attractive personality and the two men became close friends,

working together in complete harmony. Mr. Merwin was greatly loved by the people and in later years his family became closely connected by marriage with that of his successor, Mr. Porter. Mr. Merwin passed away in 1795, two years after the death of Mr. Brinsmade.

The Priest, for so Mr. Brinsmade was often called, built the house on Bell Hill which was northwest of Miss May Canfield's house and which was pulled down about 1890. It contained much fine woodwork and must have been a very attractive home in its youth. In addition to the house, Mr. Brinsmade owned considerable agricultural land in the town which he and his family farmed.

It was in connection with the various misunderstandings between the pastors and people of local churches that the Litchfield Consociation of Churches was organized. When the members of a local church desired advice, other churches were invited to send delegates for a joint meeting. Mr. Brinsmade, Dr. Bellamy and others had rigorous theological views. By uniting the churches into a fellowship, it was a simpler matter to hold to the truth and avoid error.

Mr. Brinsmade's practical turn of mind is revealed in the terms of his will. He made definite suggestions about his wife's future. His two sons were commissioned "to pay to their mother, my beloved wife, ten pounds lawful money, each of them ten pounds, annually; 440 weight of pork, one hundred weight of beef, 46 pounds of dried tallow, fifty of butter, and 200 of cheese, and firewood cut out and brought in, a good maid to live with her and do for her constantly. And it is my will that my two sons shall equally be at ye charge of keeping their mother's creatures winter and summer." As Miss Mary Brinsmade remarks in her excellent account of the Brinsmade family, "we have every reason to

believe that Daniel Nathaniel and Daniel Sherman carried out their father's behests and cared for their mother as long as she lived."

Whatever may be thought of the various issues that arose between Mr. Brinsmade and his church members, he must have had unusual qualities to have ministered to the church for forty-four years. It is the longest pastorate in the history of the church. He fought for what he believed in and did not hesitate to attack the views of those with whom he disagreed. It is said that he was a staunch Federalist. The story is that when Jefferson was being spoken of for President, Mr. Brinsmade said that if Jefferson should be elected, a bonfire of all the Bibles in Judea would be kindled on the Green, and he would be deprived of his ministerial office.

During his long pastorate, Daniel Brinsmade saw many changes take place in the little parish of Judea. Many settlers arrived and new roads were built. Schools were opened and industries were started. Judea became a flourishing community.

CHAPTER FIVE

The War of Independence

It was during the pastorate of Daniel Brinsmade that an Episcopal church was built in a northern part of the town called Davies Hollow and now called Romford. The name Davies Hollow was taken from the family which first settled in that area in 1735. John Davies and his family attended the meetings of the Episcopal Society in Litchfield, ten miles distant. It was through his efforts that St. Michael's Church in Litchfield was organized. At the age of 83, John Davies decided to build a church upon his own land because of the distance to Litchfield. He built a church upon the west side of the present small cemetery plot. He lived for three years to enjoy the worship in his own home church. The deed of gift of the church to the people of the Church of England in the town of Washington was made by his son, John Davies, January 22, 1794, in fulfillment of a promise made to his father.

His grandson, Thomas Davies, was educated at Yale and became a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. He began his duties in Litchfield County at the age of twenty-five and for five years lived an active life,

traveling on horseback from town to town, preaching the gospel, consoling the sick, baptizing, marrying and administering the rites of burial. His arduous life resulted in an early illness and he passed away at the age of thirty, being buried in the New Milford cemetery.

Like other New England communities the Judea settlement played its part in the War of Independence. Mrs. A. L. Wanzer has written an excellent account of the contribution made by this town to the establishment and the defense of the nation. The services of Washington during the first half of the Revolution are included in those of Woodbury as Judea was a part of Woodbury until 1779. When the Boston Port Bill was passed in 1774 there was great indignation throughout the colonies. At a Woodbury town meeting on the 20th of September, a committee was appointed to receive gifts and forward them to Boston. Increase Moseley and Jonathan Farrand of Judea were members of the committee.

The thirteenth regiment of Connecticut militia was organized at the outbreak of the war and was commanded by Colonel Hinman of Woodbury. Eight of the twelve companies were composed of men from Woodbury, the seventh being called the Judea Company and the tenth the New Preston Company. A good many Woodbury men took part in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga, under the leadership of Ethan Allen. Eighty Woodbury men remained at Ticonderoga and Crown Point as a part of the garrison. It is said that at the battle of White Plains over 150 Woodbury men were killed or wounded.

In 1776 Colonel Hinman joined the Continental Army and Lieutenant Moseley became colonel of the Thirteenth Connecticut militia, remaining in that position for three years. In that same year a census of the town was taken,

revealing that there were 5,325 persons in Woodbury. Those on the military rolls numbered 564. The number of able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 45 not on the rolls was 318. There were also 248 men from the town in the Continental Army.

Time and again the Thirteenth Regiment was called upon for active service. Woodbury men were at the Battle of Bennington on August 16, 1776. On April 26, 1777, Woodbury men took part in the defense of Danbury, in which battle General Wooster was killed. During that summer many soldiers were allowed to return home to work in the fields. But in the fall, when there was another draft of the militia, 300 men went from Woodbury. In 1778, 104 Woodbury men were sent to the Continental Army to fill up gaps. In 1779, all the militia under Colonel Moseley were called to the defense of Norwalk. By 1780 the supply of men was not adequate and it became necessary to offer large bounties for recruits. Woodbury voted that each man who enlisted in the Continental Army should receive a bounty of 45 pounds in addition to the state bounty, provided he stay in the service three years. To meet the cost of these bounties a tax of four pence per pound was laid. Altogether it is thought that Woodbury furnished about 1500 soldiers for the Continental armies. The last call for soldiers was in 1782 and some of those who responded at that time were present at the surrender at Yorktown.

In addition to soldiers, the people of Woodbury supplied clothing and food in large quantities. Thus the women did their part as well as the men. After the people of Judea were incorporated in the town of Washington in 1779, they made their own decisions independent of Woodbury. For example, at a meeting in February, 1779, Enos Mitchell and Captain

Hicok were appointed to supervise the raising and expenditure of money on behalf of soldiers and their families. On June 27th, 1780, the town voted to hire soldiers for a three-year enlistment, offering grain as a premium. It was also "voted that the treasurer of the town be authorized to give notes on interest, after they become due, to each soldier as aforesaid, he producing his certificate of his enlistment. Voted that the selectmen hire money for the town for the satisfaction of the premiums as aforesaid." Another vote Dec. 11th, 1780, was to the effect that "if any man in this town procure an able-bodied man to enlist into one of the Connecticut regiments for three years during the war, that he shall be exempt from any cost that shall arise in procuring soldiers, according to a late requisition of the General Assembly." A further vote, April 9th, 1781, was to "raise a tax of four pence in state money on the pound on the list of 1780, to be paid by the first day of May next to provide clothing for the army."

The most exciting event of the Revolutionary War for the Judea community was Washington's journey through Litchfield County to meet and confer with the French at Hartford. This meeting with Admiral Count de Fernay and General Rochambeau was to arrange a treaty between France and the colonies. Washington set forth from his headquarters in the Dutch settlement of Tappan on Sept. 18th, 1780. He was accompanied by his secretary, Alexander Hamilton, and five other aides, including Marquis de Lafayette. Twenty-two dragoons went with him as a bodyguard. It is probable that the party made forty miles a day over rough roads. It was his custom to dispatch a courier in advance of his departure each morning that all might be prepared for his arrival at the stopping points

along the road. The first part of the journey was up the river to King's Ferry where the river was crossed, he and his aides crossing in the barge of Benedict Arnold. General Washington and Arnold discussed plans for the campaign at that meeting, after which Arnold began immediately to plot the betrayal of West Point. Washington's party proceeded via South Kent, over New Preston Hill to Litchfield where he arrived on the 20th, reaching Hartford the next morning.

In all, Washington made three trips through this region. A second trip was in March, 1781, on his way to Hartford and Newport. A third trip was in May, 1781, at which time he took breakfast at the house of Squire Cogswell the morning of the 25th. This incident was recorded in Washington's diary. In 1746 Edward Cogswell had settled in New Preston, and his youngest child, William, kept a tavern during the Revolutionary period. Major William Cogswell was a prominent leader in the community. The tradition handed down is that when Washington had breakfast at the tavern, he was in a jovial mood and, taking the Major's small daughter upon his knee, he sang to her the famous Darby Ram song. The tavern is now the lovely colonial home of Judge Walter M. Pickett and is one of the historic landmarks in Washington.

The decision to incorporate the town of Washington was reached by the General Assembly after a petition had been received from 47 persons in Kent, 126 in Woodbury, 20 in Litchfield and 20 in New Milford. Thus the two church societies of Judea and New Preston were incorporated into a town on January 7, 1779. The new town was named Washington in honor of the Commander-in-chief. It was the first town to be incorporated after the Declaration of Independence.

The first town meeting was held on February 11th. Enos Mitchell, Nathan Hickox, William Cogswell, Joseph Guthrie and Thomas Parmelee were elected selectmen. Daniel Brinsmade became registrar and Jonathan Farrand the treasurer. David Calhoun and Michael Bryan were elected fence viewers. Matthew Logan, Brinsmade Gibson and William Guthrie were appointed a committee to provide for soldiers' families. Ebenezer Clark, Jr., Perry Averill, O. Titus, David Whittlesey and Amasa Porter were appointed a committee to provide clothing for the soldiers. At a town meeting on April 12th, 1779, 120 took the oath of allegiance to the United States. There were 49 soldiers in the Revolution known to have gone from Washington. David Judson was captain of the Judea Company and William Cogswell of the New Preston Company. Ephraim Kirby enlisted at the age of 19 and remained in service throughout the war, taking part in 19 battles and receiving thirteen wounds.

At the close of the war, Ephraim Kirby studied law in Litchfield and soon made his mark as a lawyer. In 1789 he published the first volume of legal decisions ever to be published in this country. It contained the decisions of the courts of his state. He also held high positions in the Masonic Fraternity. General Kirby Smith, commanding the last Confederate army to be surrendered, was his grandson. Mr. Kirby was appointed by President Jefferson to be a judge of the newly organized territory of Orleans and died while proceeding there, on Oct. 2, 1804.

There was great tension in this area during the war years as in other parts of the colonies. There was extreme bitterness between the patriots and the Tories. This tension is well illustrated by the history of the "Red House" on the Washington Green, built in 1772 by Abel Mott. During the war

it was occupied by Joel Stone and his brother Leman, together with their three sisters. Joel was a Tory and Leman was a Whig. Many patriots in Judea made life miserable for Joel who had refused military service in 1776. He lived in one part of the house and his brother in the other. It was literally a house divided against itself. Joel had to leave the community to avoid capture and his half of the house was confiscated. He joined the British army, was taken prisoner on Long Island, and placed in the Fairfield "gaol." Leman had an upper chamber decorated with a design in which the head of an eagle was surrounded by thirteen stars. Joel had an upper chamber decorated with British warships and other British symbols.

In the old cemetery on Plum Hill there are revolutionary markers, placed there by the Judea Chapter of the D. A. R. These markers are standing today as silent testimonials of honor and are placed upon the graves of soldiers who fought in the War of Independence. The following graves are marked: Jesse Baker, Joseph Titus, Josiah Bunce, Judah Baldwin, Isaac Camp, Elijah Hickox, Solomon Hurd, Gideon Hollister, Samuel Leavitt, Ezekiel Newton, Thomas Parker, David Whittlesey, David Walker, Elijah Hazen, Richard Bryan, D. N. Brinsmade, Enos Baldwin, Major William Cogswell, Dr. John Calhoun, N. Hickox, Jonathan Hine, Capt. David Judson, Simeon Mitchell, Oliver Olds, John Pratt, Martin Whittlesey, and James Armstrong.

In spite of the war, church affairs continued to occupy the attention of the members of the church on the Green. The people were faithful in their attendance and in the upkeep of the property. Two years after the coming of Mr. Merwin, in 1786, the society added a steeple to the church and procured a bell. There are numerous entries concerning the care

of the church. One of the last entries along this line was as follows: "granted to Peter Thorpe one pound ten shillings, the old way to sweep and take care of the meeting-house the ensuing year." The name of Peter Thorpe is of special interest because it was at his grave in the old Judea cemetery that Dr. Rossiter W. Raymond of New York preached an eloquent sermon on July 4, 1900. His theme, "Honest Worth" was suggested by the inscription on Peter Thorpe's monument, "Erected to the memory of honest worth by the friends of Peter Thorpe."

The final years of Mr. Brinsmade's pastorate were comparatively tranquil. The controversies had ceased. The elderly minister was highly respected throughout the community. He and Mr. Merwin worked together harmoniously during their joint pastorate. Mr. Brinsmade passed on to higher service at the age of seventy-four, in April, 1793, forty-four years after his ordination. Of his character and preaching, Mr. Porter has left the following comment: "Mr. Brinsmade was distinguished by a clear, comprehensive mind; had a casuistical turn; was rather argumentative in his sermons. It appears that he was a pious, able minister, though not distinguished for pulpit talents or in laborious preparation for the Sabbath."

CHAPTER SIX

The Turn of the Century

In December, 1795, Rev. Ebenezer Porter came to Washington as a supply preacher. He had received a call to the church at South Britain but had declined it and therefore consented to preach in Washington for a few weeks. The weeks lengthened into months as an attachment developed between him and the church people. He soon received an invitation to become their settled minister. Concerning this call, he wrote, "Though Washington has become to me a peculiarly agreeable place of residence, and although I should choose it on many accounts before almost any place for a home, I cannot remain here unless some circumstances attending the call are changed." He therefore declined the call.

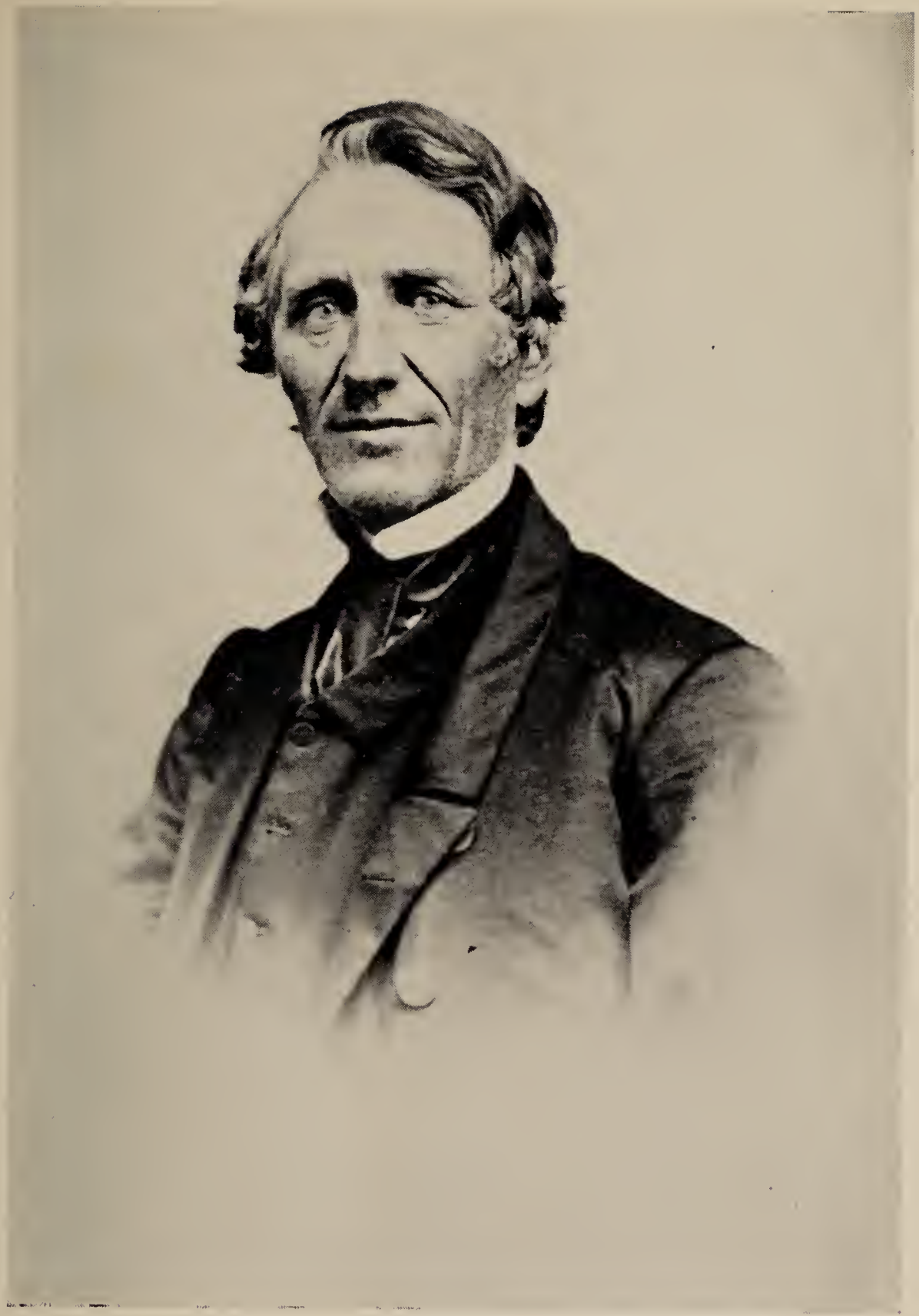
He spent several weeks in Salisbury where he was also invited to settle as minister. In the meantime the people at Washington renewed their call with certain modifications and this time the call was accepted. He returned to Washington and for his first sermon preached on the words of Peter, "Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for; I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" (Acts 10:29.) It was a sermon that set forth the

relationships and duties that ought to guide a pastor and his people.

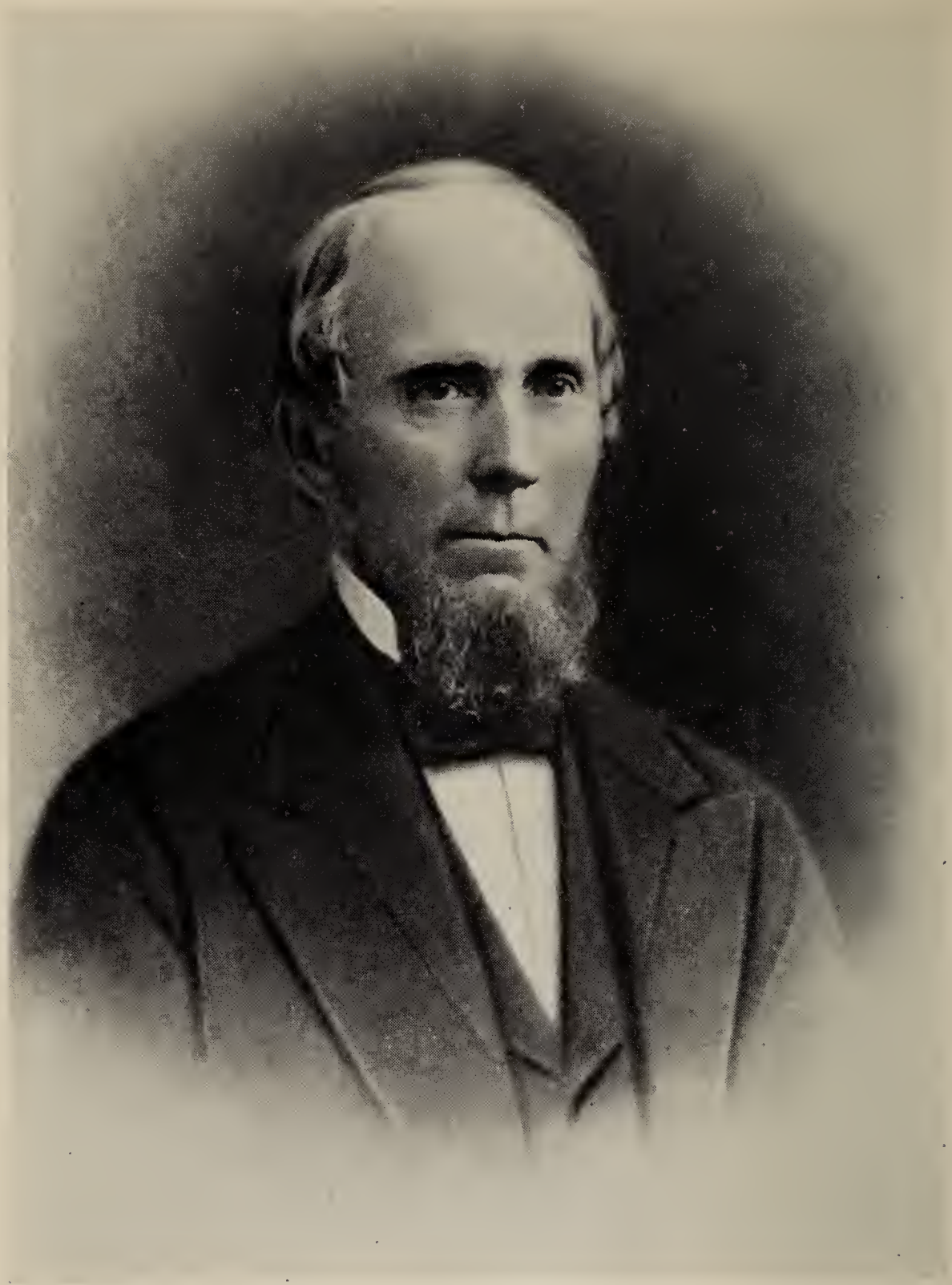
His ordination took place September 7th, 1796. Concerning the day, Mr. Porter left this comment: "The assembly was large and serious. The day was pleasant and was to me the most solemn day of my life. O that the light and warmth of divine grace from the infinite fountain may shine into my heart and influence all my conduct that I may fulfill this ministry faithfully, find this great work a pleasant work, and be ready when called to my last account."

According to Mrs. Gunn, in the excellent summary of Mr. Porter's life by Mrs. Lora N. Hollister, there were three ordination balls on the Green for different sets of people. One group met at the Peter Powell tavern which later became the "White Inn." Another group danced at the house now used as the Washington Club House. A group of young people danced at Squire Marshall's, in the house occupied for many years by the family of Daniel N. Canfield. It was necessary for the young people to go home before the ringing of the nine o'clock bell. Daniel B. Brinsmade, then a boy of fifteen, escorted Sarah Judson, the daughter of a Revolutionary general who lived in the old Red House on the Green.

Concerning his marriage, Mr. Porter has left the following note: "On the 14th of May, 1797, I was married to Lucy Pierce Merwin, eldest daughter of my predecessor, my age being 24 years the 5th of October and hers 17 years the 31st of December 1796. The marriage covenant was administered by Rev. Nathaniel Taylor of New Milford at the close of public exercises on the Sabbath." Mr. Porter's home was the house which became, after he left it, the General Brinsmade house and which stood near the present site of the Brownley Inn but close to the road.



GIDEON H. POND



EPHRAIM LYMAN

MINISTER

1852–1863

In his historical statement at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the church, Rev. J. L. R. Wyckoff calls the fifteen years of Mr. Porter's pastorate the most signal epoch in the history of this church. That judgment is probably correct. Mr. Wyckoff does not make such a statement in disparagement of those who preceded and who succeeded Mr. Porter. He feels, however, that Mr. Porter's work was unique both in the quality of the man and in the spirit of the times. It was a happy combination. The foundations had been well laid and the times were ripe for the unique gifts of Mr. Porter.

From the day of his ordination it seemed to be Mr. Porter's purpose to spend his life in the service of the Washington church. He set forth a carefully-prepared plan of action. His first efforts seemed to be in the education and improvement of young people. He was greatly interested in the local schools, visiting them regularly. He kept a record of such visits, jotting down the general appearance of the schools and the proficiency shown at examinations from year to year. He frequently invited the teachers to meet with him that he might make suggestions to them as to how they might make their work more effective. At that time the catechism was taught in the schools and it was Mr. Porter's custom to catechise the children between the Sunday services. We might call such a class a forerunner of our modern Sunday School. Moreover he taught a class composed of those who had completed their work in the common schools.

Another important phase of his work was his teaching of theological students, one or more of whom lived in his home. He literally had a small theological school of his own and developed a system by which he taught these young men who were going into the Christian ministry. He would ask a ques-

tion, explaining it in a lecture, or with a notice that a sermon would be adapted to it on the following Sunday. At a subsequent meeting the written papers would be handed in or perhaps read publicly but without signifying who had written them. After this theological or Biblical problem had received due consideration, another problem would be stated. It seems evident that many local young people were present at these classes of instruction, in addition to the theological students. For it is said 12 or 15 often wrote on a question and that from 30 to 80 attended the meetings. These classes continued in the years 1802, 1803 and 1804 but were then discontinued for a period because of the frail health of the pastor.

These weekly gatherings increased in interest and led directly to the first important revival since the establishment of the church. In the fall and winter of 1804, 54 persons united with the church. Mr. Porter himself has described this event in the rather quaint language of the time. "Near the close of the summer of 1803 things began to wear a brighter aspect. During the winter the operations of the divine Spirit were discernible in a part of the society. The church which had appeared to languish put on the aspect of returning health. People collected as if awake and in earnest. Even those whom infirmity might well have excused were often seen miles from home at an evening meeting. Many old professors amidst the glory of the scene seemed unable to express the wonder and joy of their hearts."

Books were scarce in those days and also expensive. Therefore Mr. Porter established a circulating library. According to the records of the Ministerial Association of the county, he did the same for that organization. Similarly he

established a library for the young people and their special needs. He was the first supervisor of schools and taught the first high school. In a real sense, his various organizations did for the Washington church what the Sunday School, Christian Endeavor and prayer meeting did for churches a century later. The Maternal Association, so useful in New England, was organized under his leadership. He put into successful operation in the parish a Home Missionary Society.

He is said to have preached the first temperance sermon ever published in this country. A few weeks after it was delivered, it was read by request before the ministerial association, Mr. Porter and Dr. Lyman Beecher being appointed by that body a committee for the suppression of vice.

Mr. Porter was one of the first to remonstrate publicly against the law which required the transmission and opening of mails on the Sabbath. The petition for its repeal was written here in Washington in 1811 by Mr. Porter and upon it he inscribed this comment: "The first movement of the kind in the United States."

On June 16th, 1797, a more elaborate confession of faith than the one heretofore in use was proposed by the pastor and unanimously adopted by the people. It was as follows:

"Do you believe the scriptures both of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice?

Do you believe the catechism of the Assembly of Divines that is in common use among us, so far as you are acquainted with it, and understand it to be agreeable to the word of God?

Do you believe that there are three persons in the God-head, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one God?

Do you believe that for his own glory God created the heavens and the earth and all things that are therein and that he constantly upholds and governs all things?

Do you believe that man was at first made holy and upright but that by his disobedience he fell from that holy and happy state and thereby all his posterity are involved in sin and ruin?

Do you believe that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, hath given himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world; that he is the mediator of the new covenant and the only way through which sinners may return to and find acceptance with God?

Do you believe that all men are by nature wilfully opposed to the gospel of Christ and that if any become willing heartily to submit to it, it is to be accounted to the mere mercy and sovereign grace of God?

Do you believe that though we are justified by faith alone, yet that personal holiness and universal obedience are required of believers and that a holy life and conversation are the best evidence of our being in a justified state?

Do you believe that all who are once united to Christ in the covenant of grace shall be kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation?

Do you believe that the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth; that we shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, that the wicked shall go away into endless punishment and the righteous unto life eternal?"

At a church meeting on February 27, 1806, it was voted that the following clause be inserted into the church Covenant, as follows: "engaging also (each one of you who is or, in the providence of God, may become the master of a family) to maintain that daily worship of God in your family."

Like the confession of faith, the covenant was of a rigorous and somber nature, in harmony with the New England theology of that day. The amended covenant was as follows: "You do now, under an awful sense of the corruption of your nature and the manifold transgressions which you have committed against God through the course of your life, profess unfeigned repentance for all your sins, trusting in the mercy of God through Christ. You do also in the awful presence of God and before angels and men solemnly and religiously give up yourself and all that you have and are to that God whose name alone is Jehovah, the one only living and true God, avouching the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as your God and Father; the Lord Jesus Christ his son as your prophet, priest and king, and the only mediator of the covenant of grace; and the Holy Ghost as your only sanctifier and comforter; promising to take the word of God as your only rule of faith and practice, giving yourself up to this his church, to walk together with his church in all the duties of social worship, engaging also (each one of you who is or, in the providence of God, may become the master of a family), to maintain the daily religious worship of God in your family; subjecting yourself to the commands and institutions of the gospel and to the government of Christ in this church until orderly dismissed; promising all fraternal care, love and watchfulness toward and over others of your fellow members of this holy communion, and duly to attend the sacraments and all other ordinances which Christ

hath instituted in his church and commanded to be attended to by his people; always depending on the aid of divine grace to strengthen and enable you to the performance of these conditions."

It was during Mr. Porter's pastorate that the church building was burned and a new building erected. In July of 1800, the church was set on fire by a man of unsound mind. Fortunately the fire was discovered in time and put out so that no great damage was done. The bell had sounded the alarm, bringing the people to the scene, and the blaze was extinguished in about an hour. The cost of repairing the damage was about $200. The man's motive for setting the church on fire was that his pair of oxen had been sold in order to cover his debt to the church and he had become greatly incensed. At the time of the fire it was not known who had committed the deed.

On the night of April 30th, 1801, the building was again set on fire by the same person. This time the fire broke out in the steeple in the middle of the night and had gained such headway before being discovered that it was not possible to save the building and it became a total loss.

Within a week a meeting of the society had been held and it was unanimously voted to build another meeting-house. Mr. Porter has left the following record of the building of the new church: "When public worship was thrown into a state of derangement at a season of the year when the labors of the field called for the undivided attention of the people, without any preparation to meet so unexpected an event; under all these embarrassments no one sank into despondence or said, 'We will till our farms and tend our flocks and let the sanctuary lie in ruins.' At a moment which called for the collective wisdom, cool reflection, deliberate resolution and

united exertion of this people with one heart and hand all set about the work.

"Within six months from the first stroke, the building was so far prepared that we assembled in it on Thanksgiving Day for public worship and in 18 months and one week it was finished. And it is a fact worthy to be recorded that, though the expense of the meeting-house amounted to about six thousand dollars and there was great urgency for a speedy payment, not one individual was called upon by distraint of law to furnish his proportion."

One amusing story told of the church that was burned states that there was a feather bed kept in the church for the convenience of a Mrs. Mitchell, an invalid, who used to attend church and recline upon the bed. Some who watched the fire claimed they could see the feather bed going up in smoke. After the new church was built, the woman who was an invalid had a rocking chair in which to sit during the church services.

Mr. Porter's settlement and salary were considerably smaller than the arrangements made with his predecessors. His settlement was $666.67 and his salary $383.33. As time passed he found it increasingly inadequate for his expenses. In 1809 he felt it necessary to make known his situation to his people and ask relief at their hands. This correspondence has been carefully kept. The following extract is taken from his letter. "With all the prudence which I have been able to practise, my salary is inadequate to support my family and the company which it belongs to every minister to entertain. As to support, my salary has not been what I had good reason to think it would be when I settled. It was supposed that the troubles in Europe which had then begun would soon subside, so that the proposed salary would be sufficient and

I accepted it. Contrary to my expectations, many articles of living and all kinds of agricultural and mechanical labor rose about one third in price. Of course the value of my salary sunk in the same proportion. After spending thirteen years of my prime in Washington, with a small family, and as strict a system of economy as I think proper for a minister to exercise; and after having received important aids from sources on which I have no right to place further dependence, I still owe several hundred dollars on interest, which I have no means of paying, unless I sell my land, and without my land I have no reasonable prospect of support."

This statement naturally caused some excitement and was generally discussed by the members. Feelings were aroused and unkind statements made. An effort was made by a few of Mr. Porter's friends to raise his salary to a sum corresponding with the intent of the original agreement but this effort failed. In consequence, Mr. Porter wrote the church members another letter, stating the details more fully and concluding with the following paragraph: "To conclude this statement, I have only to say to you, brethren, that if you can devise any means to restore tranquillity to this society, and afford me a competent support, I shall be happy to remain your minister. I can forget all the cruel things that have been said, provided I can have reason to think they will be forgotten by you. But I cannot remain here and see you a divided people. I cannot remain here and receive a support which is drawn from you with reluctance. I had rather have your friendship than your money. I must insist on it, if anything is done, that it be done cheerfully. If something effectual cannot be done, I presume you will think it reasonable to join with me in calling the Consociation, that our relation may be dissolved."

There then followed an effort to raise the salary by subscription, with the proviso that either the pastor or the people might sever the relationship through giving a six months' notice, after which the salary would cease. This vote was accepted by Mr. Porter in the hope that the matter would be amicably settled. The excitement, however, did not die down and unpleasant remarks continued to be made. Whereupon Mr. Porter sent a further communication to the church, setting forth the whole situation, and asking to be released from his duties within a period of six months. After further correspondence, the day of dismission was fixed and letters were sent out for the purpose of convening an ecclesiastical council.

Before this council met, however, the pastor received an affectionate address from some of the young men of the parish, including the following appeal: "The young people of Washington, animated with the highest sentiments of love and attachment to their pastor, respectfully request leave to present this address, as an expression of their esteem and friendship to him; a friendship which thirteen years' acquaintance has only served to strengthen and increase. Bearing in mind the valuable instructions we have received, too deep an impression is made on our hearts to be easily effaced. We have beheld the tender solicitude which our minister has ever manifested to promote our happiness. The young people are sensible of the privileges they have enjoyed while under the charge of their present pastor. While we thus pay our tribute of respect, may we not be permitted to cherish the hope that they may still be continued? We sincerely regret that this union is apparently on the verge of dissolution. We entertain the pleasing hope that Mr. Porter will approve the measures adopted to preserve the continu-

ance of this union. As the difficulty that has arisen between Mr. Porter and the society has been respecting his salary, and as some of our fathers and friends have wished a condition annexed thereto, we, their sons, wish no such thing. We are willing to give our pastor an honorable support, not clogged with any conditions. And if Providence should lengthen his life beyond his usefulness here as a preacher, we are willing to give, in the evening of his life, that support which a grateful people will ever be willing to give a beloved pastor."

This letter brought a happy change in the atmosphere. It became evident that there was a strong attachment to him as a man and a preference for him as a minister. His determination to leave wavered. When the council met on April 25th, 1810, the advice given was that the relation between pastor and people should be continued. "Feeling the utmost confidence in the fidelity of your minister, we hope and trust that by his faithful efforts he may, with the blessing of God, be the instrument of unspeakable good."

Mr. Porter remained for three years more in Washington, with the affection and esteem of the people showered upon him. In the meantime, when it was rumored that he was to leave the church, several applications were made for his services. One was from the First Church of New Haven, which he saw fit to decline. Many of his friends, including Dr. Dwight of Yale, urged him to accept the New Haven call but he did not see his way to doing so. At about the same time, the Andover Theological Seminary was seeking some one to fill the chair of Pulpit Eloquence and by a unanimous vote of the trustees, Mr. Porter was elected to this post. When announced to Mr. Porter on Sept. 24th, 1811, he felt that his health would not allow him to consider it. To

this uncertainty concerning his health, there was also his apprehension that his talents had been overrated. His cautious attitude is well illustrated by a paper which he drew up at the time, setting down in parallel columns the affirmative and negative reasons why he should or should not remain at Washington. Among his reasons for going there appeared this statement: "My prospects of happiness and usefulness here are impaired by the events of 1809 and 1810. My salary was raised by constraint rather than by conviction and choice; things were said and done by individuals which can never be retracted; impressions were made on my feelings which can never be effaced; the fire which then raged so terribly, though smothered, is not extinguished."

Thus the misunderstanding about salary was an important factor in deciding Mr. Porter's acceptance of the Andover call. He entered upon his duties at Andover upon the first day of April, 1812, and remained with that institution until the day of his death in 1834, becoming its president in 1827. All through the years he had a constant struggle with ill health. In 1814 the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Dartmouth College.

Concerning Mr. Porter's appearance and character, Mr. Matthews leaves the following pen portrait: "Imagine a well-proportioned, manly, but emaciated form of about six feet in height. Imagine that form endued with native independence, firmness, energy, candor, frankness, simplicity and benevolence, united with an enlargement of mental vision, which intuitively perceived the relations and bearing of objects; regulated and controlled by that sound common sense which rightly apprehends circumstances, and adapts means to ends; the whole assemblage of attributes chastened and invigorated by Christian piety, sanctifying, ennobling,

and giving impulse to the natural man,—imagine this individual daily struggling with disease and suffering, in active, persevering, disinterested, holy effort; renouncing lawful indulgences, enduring incessant toil and weariness for others' good, living, in a word, not unto himself but unto God, and then you have the likeness of Dr. Porter."

Upon the monument erected to his memory by the American Education Society, in the cemetery at Andover, there is this epitaph: "Of cultivated understanding, refined taste, solid judgment, sound faith, and ardent piety; distinguished for strict integrity and uprightness, kind and gentle deportment, simplicity and godly sincerity, a father to the institution with which he was connected, a highly useful instructor, a zealous patron of the benevolent societies of the times in which he lived, a true friend to the temporal and eternal interests of his fellow-beings."

Several months after Mr. Porter's departure for Andover, a call was given to Mr. Asa Blair and was accepted. A committee was appointed to make arrangements for the ordination and installation. A vote was passed to give Mr. Blair six hundred dollars a year for his salary. There then is found in the society records this unusual note: "Owing to opposition and to the coldness of friends, Mr. Blair concluded, by and with advice, that it was not best for him to settle here."

The Rev. Cyrus Gray was then called to be the pastor and settled here in April, 1813, with an annual salary of $550. In his letter of acceptance, Mr. Gray wrote, "The support you offer is thought by my friends hardly adequate to free your minister from those perplexities from which you wish him to be free. This has indeed been my own opinion. At the same time, I could not justify myself in questioning your liberality. These are matters of opinion merely. They con-

cern not the heart. Relying upon your liberality of feeling, praying that whatever is done may be to the upbuilding of this church, I subscribe to your invitation and shall hold myself in readiness to appear before the ordaining council."

After a short pastorate of two years, difficulties arose between Mr. Gray and the members of the church. The records do not state the nature of the serious misunderstanding. An unhappy meeting of the Ecclesiastical Consociation was held and the difficulties were carefully considered. Both pastor and church members were reproved and the dissolution of the pastoral relationship was recommended. As a result the church was left in an unfortunate frame of mind and remained without the services of a settled pastor for two and a half years.

On September 29th, 1817, at a society meeting, it was voted to unite with the church in extending a call to Rev. Stephen Mason to become their settled minister. On Nov. 11th, the Society's Committee, composed of Daniel B. Brinsmade, Preston S. Hollister and Calvin Calhoun, was asked to make arrangements to have Mr. Mason preach in the church. On December 5th, it was voted to offer Mr. Mason $550 a year as his salary. In a letter written on January 10th, 1818, Mr. Mason accepted the call.

For ten years Mr. Mason served the church with great zeal and faithfulness. For some years preceding his arrival the church records had been neglected. Mr. Mason, like Mr. Porter, kept a faithful record of events during his pastorate. In beginning the account, he relates that he found the church in a divided state of mind. After his installation on February 18th, a new spirit of harmony began to prevail. A new interest was revealed in the evangelistic and educational work of the church. The catechising committee was enlarged

so as to have one instructor for each ten children. The committee for that year was comprised of the following: Deacon Preston S. Hollister, Gideon Hollister, Jr., Ebenezer Clark, Daniel Nettleton, Mrs. Betsy Mason, Mrs. Mary Brinsmade, Mrs. Silence Mitchell, Mrs. Lois Mitchell, Miss Polly Loggan and Miss Julia Loggan.

During the summer of 1820 there was a series of prayer meetings with the result that in September, 19 persons joined the church. An interesting resolution, passed Aug. 29th, 1822, "set apart next Tuesday as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer on account of the alarming sickness which is prevailing and also on account of the low state of religion." In such a manner, the minds of the people were turned to spiritual matters and during his pastorate there was a marked revival of interest and loyalty in the church.

It is not easy at this distance to understand why friction developed in most of the pastorates during the first century in the history of the church. As had been the case with Mr. Brinsmade, Mr. Porter and Mr. Gray, so now a critical attitude developed toward Mr. Mason. At a society meeting on Nov. 4th, 1828, presided over by Daniel B. Brinsmade, it was voted to appoint a committee "to inquire of the members of this society whether they are satisfied with the Rev. Stephen Mason as their minister or not, and to confer with him as to the state of feelings in the society."

On Nov. 17th, this committee made their report and stated that 52 were satisfied, 52 were dissatisfied and 9 expressed no opinion. When asked to vote whether they wanted Mr. Mason to continue as their minister, under the circumstances, 27 voted in the affirmative and 45 in the negative. When the result of this vote was communicated to Mr. Mason, he wrote to the church, expressing his desire that the

pastoral relationship be dissolved. A meeting of the Consociation was called and the pastoral relationship was dissolved. The statement by the Consociation held a rebuke for the church. Concerning it, a note in the church records has this to say: "The result of the Consociation in dismissing Mr. Mason from his pastoral relation to this church and society may be seen in the society record. The Consociation came to this result solely on the ground that a dissatisfaction with the Rev. Stephen Mason existed to a considerable extent, for which dissatisfaction no sufficient reasons appeared. The society record may afford some light on the causes of this dissatisfaction but comparatively little will be publicly known till the record of God shall be declared respecting it at the final judgment."

There can be little doubt that Mr. Mason was a man of earnest and gentle Christian spirit. His kindly and peaceable attitude may be seen in the spirit with which he met the contention and criticism of the church. He was willing to make sacrifices rather than endanger the unity of the church. He was zealous for the cause of evangelism. He was particularly active in the formation of the County Bible Society and also the General Union for promoting the observance of the Sabbath.

Six days after the reference to Mr. Mason's departure in the church record, there is an interesting item that illustrates the connection between New England and the Middle West that was now being opened up to settlement. On Dec. 28th, 1828, it was voted "that vessels which were formerly used by the church at their communion be presented to the Church of Christ in Medina in the state of Ohio, as a token of our respect and affection and that a committee of the church be appointed to draft a communication expressive

of our fraternal feelings to accompany the same. Brother D. B. Brinsmade appointed for that purpose."

At a meeting of the society on Sept. 14th, 1829, it was voted to call Rev. Gordon Hayes to settle in Washington as the minister of the church, and the society united with the church in extending the call. It was also voted to offer Mr. Hayes $550 per year for his services as pastor. On October 7th, Mr. Hayes accepted the call and the installation took place on October 28th. Then began a ministry which extended over a period of twenty-three years.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Revivals

After the Great Awakening which occurred during the years when the church was being established in Judea, beginning in 1734, there was a gradual decline in religious fervor in New England churches. The Revolution may well have been an important factor in this decline of religious interest. In the rush and turmoil of war conditions, uncertainties and anxieties, it is not surprising that the cause of religion suffered. The minds of the people were on other things. Taxation was an ever-present problem. The creation of the new Republic with its numerous constitutional questions was also a diversion. Furthermore a spirit of skepticism and of rationalism was prevalent in Europe and America.

Whatever the causes may have been, religious conditions at the close of the eighteenth century were deplorable. There was widespread profanity, much drunkenness and also immorality. The Sabbath was not treated with the reverence it had formerly received. In his "History of Connecticut," George L. Clark says that during the years 1790-96, Nathan Strong, the successor of Thomas Hooker in the First Church of Hartford, carried on a distillery a short

distance away from his church. City records show real estate deals involving over $30,000, in which the pastor had a leading part. Another story concerns three Congregational pastors around Hartford, one of whom was said to raise the rye, another to distill it into whiskey, and the third to drink it.

After the year 1797, there came a change. President Dwight of Yale preached a series of sermons that had a tremendous influence. Revivals began to take place in various parts of New England and continued to occur at intervals for sixty years. With these revivals, a good deal of the looseness of doctrine and laxity of discipline in the churches disappeared. The Connecticut Home Missionary Society was organized in 1798 and has performed valiant Christian services throughout the state from that day to this. Various seminaries were established, including Yale in 1822 and Hartford in 1834.

Thus the new century was ushered in by a great increase in religious interest. There was a spiritual momentum to be reckoned with. It had its introspective aspects such as depressing self-examination and continuing anxiety. It was thought that a genuine conversion must be accompanied by morbid self-torture. Yet there were many outward and wholesome phases of the revival movement. Churches gave increased attention to Bible study, especially for young people. Ministers began to preach temperance. Weekly prayer meetings were held in the churches and family prayers were restored. The keeping of the Sabbath once again took hold of the public conscience.

While the revival movement was spread over the years, there was a noticeable ebb and flow. The years 1803, 1821, 1831 and 1837 were noteworthy revival years. The church

at Washington felt the impact of the movement in each of those years. But so did other churches in this whole area. In the "Connecticut Evangelical Magazine," during the year 1800, letters appeared from correspondents telling of the revival of religion in Torringford, West Britain, New Cambridge, Northington, Torrington, West Simsbury, Bridgehampton, New Hartford, Wintonbury, Norfolk, Goshen, Farmington, Harwinton and other places.

Mention has already been made of the revival of religious interest during the pastorate of Mr. Porter. This renewal of interest began in the year 1803. During the fall and winter various meetings and conferences were held. People were eager and earnest. In his excellent paper "The Revival History of the Washington Church," delivered at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary, Deacon S. S. Baldwin says that during this revival two more deacons were appointed in order to assist in the work. By a vote of the church two young men were chosen for the office. They were twin brothers, Preston Sherman and Sherman Preston Hollister, sons of Captain Gideon and Patience Hurd Hollister. They closely resembled each other and it is said that Mrs. Gunn could only tell them apart by their overcoats; one wore a gray and the other a blue overcoat. They married sisters, united with the church at the same time, some ten years before being appointed deacons, and resigned together at the age of seventy from their work as deacons. Each had a son named for him. Deacon Preston married Lois Ford and lived at the homestead on the top of the hill near the East Street schoolhouse. Deacon Sherman married Sarah Ford and lived in a house which Captain Gideon built for him and which he passed on to his son, Samuel Ford Hollister, who died there in 1888.

It was during this same period that another Hollister appeared on the scene who was later to achieve fame as the author of the "History of Connecticut." This was Gideon Hiram Hollister who was baptized on June 7, 1818. He was a great-grandson of the original Gideon who had settled in Nettleton Hollow. He graduated from Yale in 1840 and soon became a leading lawyer in the state. He is best known for his historical research, his history appearing in 1855.

Deacon Baldwin tells of a young people's social gathering on Thanksgiving eve in 1816 at the house of Samuel Baldwin in Sabba' Day Lane. During their evening together, a serious mood entered into their fellowship and they requested a young Christian, John A. Oviatt, to pray with them. Before separating they invited him to conduct a meeting at the house of Mr. Bryan in Calhoun Street the following week. He consented to do this if he could secure the aid of Lemuel Brooks, a young man who was preparing for the ministry. The meeting at Mr. Bryan's home was marked by spiritual earnestness and from this small beginning a new spirit took hold of the church. Prayer meetings were held in different parts of the town, and also union meetings with members of the New Preston church. Some of these meetings were held in the homes of Martin Whittlesey and Taylor Mitchell. It is said that at a meeting in the Northeast district, a licentiate named Rev. Samuel R. Andrews offered a prayer three quarters of an hour in length. Mr. Andrews was later pastor of the church in South Woodbury for about thirty years.

The revival of 1821 was unusual from the standpoint of those who united with the church, a majority of whom were past middle age. There were also a number of young women who united with the church at that time who rendered

valiant service in the life of the church for many years to come, singing in the choir, teaching in the Sabbath School and helping in many other ways. Among them were Sophronia Leavitt, Frances Hickox, Rebecca Hine, Susan Fenn, Clarissa Hollister, and Mary Ford. There was Edwin Bronson who became the successful pastor of several churches in Pennsylvania. There was Dr. Warren R. Fowler who joined the church at the age of forty-one. He was Washington's beloved physician from the year 1800 until he passed away in 1826. He lived in the house known as the Hurlbut house, now the Washington Club. He is spoken of as a man of keen intellect, sound judgment and wide influence. He had a fine tenor voice and sang in the choir. In 1826 there was an epidemic of malignant fever and Dr. Fowler was a victim to it as were other prominent men like Judge Brinsmade and Sheriff Gunn. A younger brother, Dr. Remus Fowler, was called from Massachusetts to attend his brother Warren and remained here to carry on his practice.

Another to join the church during this revival was David Punderson. During his early days he was an open critic of the church and ridiculed religious activities. He was to become an active Christian worker and to hold the office of deacon for thirty-two years. Still another was Nathaniel J. Galpin of whom it was said that he attended more prayer meetings in his day than any other living man. Deacon Baldwin comments that the parlor in Mr. Galpin's home was the birthplace of three revivals.

In 1825 an evangelist named Rev. Asahel Nettleton visited Washington and conducted meetings for the people. As a result of his efforts twenty-nine persons were added to the church.

In 1827, while Mr. Mason was still pastor, there was another movement of the spirit among the members of the church. In this work various church leaders were active, among them the two Deacon Hollisters. Young people were drawn into the life of the church and district prayer meetings were held. For two days there was a large conference at which there were representatives of about thirty churches. Reports were given and there were many addresses by laymen, among them President Timothy Dwight of Yale.

During the early part of the ministry of Rev. Gordon Hayes, in the spring of 1831, there occurred another revival in the church. It is said that a man in the northern part of the town arose in the middle of the night and asked his young wife to pray for him. Another in the southern part of the parish was so agitated by his sense of sin that the bed shook under him. Rev. Albert Judson of Philadelphia, a visiting clergyman, preached a sermon on the text, "Think on these things," in which he discussed the meaning of conversion and of the soul's submission to God. A sunrise prayer meeting was established. Beginning August 14th, meetings were held continuously for four days. Writing of this revival some time later in the "Religious Intelligencer" the writer said that of the revivals in several nearby towns in Litchfield County, the one at Washington was the most powerful.

The following account of this revival is found in the records of the church: "This day one hundred and thirteen united with the church, thirty-three of whom received the ordinance of baptism; fruits of a revival which commenced on May last. At this time it is judged that two hundred are subjects of hope. We had a four days' meeting in August. During the meeting and three or four days subsequent not

less than fifty attained hope. In this revival Christians have been ardent in prayer and felt it their duty to go from house to house and on all suitable occasions warn sinners of their danger and urge them to immediate repentance. These appear to be the means most signally blessed to the salvation of souls." Oct. 28, 1831.

Among those joining the church was a man over seventy and a child of eight years. There were five who later became ministers of the gospel of Christ and several who became deacons. On the first Sunday of March, 1832, fifteen more united with the church. Both the Temperance Society and the Anti-Slavery Movement had their origin in this revival.

In 1842, once again a spiritual awakening was felt throughout the church membership. A committee of parish visitation went out two by two, visiting and praying with families in turn. Conferences were revived, the first being held at the home of Truman Woodruff where there was a discussion concerning the question, What must I do to be saved? At another meeting at the home of Mrs. Elliott Brinsmade, the theme of the meeting was the cry of two blind men, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon us." At a third meeting in the schoolhouse in the East district, the thought of the meeting was concerned with the prayer of the dying thief, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." As a result of these meetings, forty-five members were added to the church, many of them young people. Among them was Abner W. Mitchell who gave his life for his country.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Church Discipline

In his excellent paper, given at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the church, Rev. W. S. Colton spoke of the formative influences at work in the early New England churches. As pure gold comes forth refined from a hot fire, so the colonists were shaped by their difficult living conditions. Their lives were governed by a hard discipline and it is not surprising that the note of discipline was thus stressed in church life. If discipline was desirable for home and community life, it was equally important for church affairs. Theology was of a somber nature. People took their religion with desperate earnestness. Christian convictions were deeply held and church members spent much time in discussing religious doctrines. In the early days of this church it was entirely in order for the church members to discuss publicly delinquencies in faith and practice and, if deemed desirable, to suspend and even excommunicate church members.

For example, turning over the pages of the church record, one finds the following resolution of July 31st, 1825: "the disorderly conduct of Sister X and Brother Y being laid

before the church, these two members were suspended from the privileges of the church by vote and during the pleasure of the church."

November 4th. "At a regular church meeting, voted that as Brother Y and Sister X have given no evidence of repentance and taken no measures to become reconciled to this church, that the pastor be authorized to cite them to appear before the church on Friday the 30th of December, 1825, to show cause if any exist why the church should not proceed to an act of excommunication against them."

May 5th, 1826. "At a regular church meeting at the close of divine service, preparatory to the sacrament of the supper, on next Sunday. Voted almost unanimously that Sister X be excommunicated from this church. Also voted that Brother Y be finally cut off from this church. And this act of the church respecting each of these persons be made public at the close of worship on Sabbath after next."

Again, under the date March 23rd, 1828, we find the following resolution: "The offenses of Sister A and Sister B being laid before the church and it appearing that each of them had been faithfully labored with according to the direction of the gospel, the church voted to suspend them from their communion for the term of six weeks, and that the pastor cite them to appear before the church at the close of worship on Sabbath the 5th day of May next."

May 5th. "No answer having been made by Sister A and Sister B to the letters of citation and they not appearing at this time, the church adjourned the meeting to the first Sabbath of June next."

June 1st. "The church met according to adjournment and concluded, before passing a final act of excision against the offending members, to labor with them still further. A

committee was raised for this purpose who were to report next Sabbath."

June 8th. "The committee reported that having labored with Sister A, they find her giving no evidence of repentance. The brethren then voted with unanimity that Sister A be excommunicated from this church and that this act of the church be made public next Sabbath."

"The committee reported favorably in the case of Sister B, stating that she not only acknowledged her offense, but gave some evidence of penitence, and recommended that in consideration of her peculiarly trying circumstances, she be allowed a further opportunity of being reconciled to this church. Whereupon voted that Sister B be allowed the space of three months in which she may have the opportunity, according to her own conscience, to make satisfaction to this church."

Sept. 21st. "The church after considering the case of Sister B and learning from the committee that she requested further time be allowed her to be reconciled, resolved by their vote that she be continued in a state of suspension during the pleasure of this church."

This suspension must have been of a rather lengthy nature as no further mention is made of the case of Sister B in the records of the following years.

There were occasions when the church felt it necessary to take note of the neglect of religious duties as well as matters of moral conduct. For example, under the date of Sept. 1st, 1843, the following note is found in the church records: "The committee appointed to visit Brother A reported that they had discharged the duty assigned them and that while Brother A acknowledges a continued neglect of public and family worship and the sacrament of the Lord's supper and

a too free use of intoxicating liquor, he gives no evidence of repentance. Whereupon it was voted that Brother A be cited to appear before this church on Friday the 3rd of November next at 3 P. M. to show reasons if any he have why his relation to this church should longer be continued."

Nov. 3rd, 1843. "The church met according to adjournment. The citation of Brother A was read. Brother A did not appear. Whereupon the said Brother A was by vote of the church excommunicated."

Another case affecting religious beliefs and practices is recorded for the year 1843. Under the date, November 3rd, there is this resolution: "Voted that Deacon Sherman P. Hollister, Daniel Calhoun and Herman Baldwin be a committee to visit Brother B in reference to errors of faith and practice."

Jan. 6th, 1844. "The committee appointed to visit Brother B reported that they had called upon him and that he refused to receive them as a committee of the church. Whereupon voted that Brother B be cited to appear before this church to answer for his errors in faith and practice on Friday March 1st, after the preparatory lecture."

March 4th, 1844. "The church met. The charges with their specifications were sustained. Whereupon voted that in view of his errors in faith and practice Brother B is no longer a member of this church. Voted that his excommunication be made public."

In the fall of 1845 there was an interesting case of discipline affecting a member who desired to leave the church but expressed no desire to unite with another church. At a church meeting on Oct. 31st, the following action was taken. "The request of Brother C for a dissolution of his connection with this church without signifying a desire to unite

with any other church was read and after much deliberation a committee consisting of Deacon David Punderson and Brother Russell Frisbie was appointed to inquire into the delinquency of Brother C as to worship, communion and pecuniary aid in the support of religion and to labor with him in the spirit of the gospel."

January 2nd, 1846. "The committee appointed at a former meeting to labor with Brother C reported the following preamble and resolution which were adopted: Whereas Brother C has requested that his relation to this church may be dissolved without signifying a desire to unite with any other church, the granting of which request would in effect be excommunication from the Church of Christ, for which we have no authority in scripture on the ground of mere request: And whereas the said request is founded on a dissatisfaction with the church and minister for which we see no just cause: Therefore voted that the request of Brother C be not granted; and that he be affectionately admonished of the importance of a full discharge of duty in relation to the worship, communion and pecuniary burdens of the church, and to remember the exhortation of the apostle, Heb. 10:23-25—'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.' "

In the fall of that same year, there was another case of discipline necessitated by the growth of discord among the people. Under the date of Oct. 30th, the following resolution was recorded: At a regular meeting the church took up the

case of Brother D, and came to the following result:— "Whereas Brother D notwithstanding his solemn covenant on admission to it to walk with this church and seek its edification and peace till regularly dismissed therefrom, has for a long time withdrawn in a great measure from its worship and communion and of late distinguished himself among those who by their public acts have denounced and reviled this church and the churches in its connection as having no claim to be called churches of Christ, and by a new organization have sought to promote and perpetuate discord and division; And whereas covenant breaking, reviling and schism are sins of a deep dye to be visited with the highest censures of the church,—therefore voted that Brother D is no longer a member of this church and that this act of exclusion be publicly read on the next Sabbath." There is a further note to the effect that Brother D appealed from this decision but that the Consociation refused to sustain the appeal.

Perhaps the importance of church discipline for the church members of a century or more ago may be best summarized by a resolution which was passed at a church meeting on Nov. 18th, 1850. It was as follows: "Whereas every member on admission to the church solemnly covenants to submit to its discipline till regularly dismissed therefrom, to walk with it in love and to attend on its ordinances and worship— And whereas a remedy for every grievance is provided in a regular course of discipline which every member is at liberty to institute in case of private trespass or public offence— And whereas the Consociation has especially provided for cases of scandal or heresy, Constitution, Articles 4 and 5, the former relating to the body of a church, the latter to a pastor.

"Therefore, voted that no member can be justified in violating his covenant obligation by withdrawing from the worship and communion of the church, until, by a regular course of discipline, he has failed to remedy the evil of which he complains, and has full evidence that the church as a body is essentially corrupt."

The problem of amusements was one that was never entirely solved but rather would arise from time to time to disturb the peace of mind of many church members. There was usually a difference of opinion between the younger and older members. At a meeting on March 17th, 1851, there was considerable discussion concerning amusements and especially dancing which was evidently becoming popular. As a result of the discussion the following resolution was passed: "Whereas the members of this church have covenanted to walk with and watch over each other in Christian love, to promote its purity and peace and to discharge all those duties by which God may be glorified and the religion of the Bible extended and established among men— And whereas some of its members engage in the amusements of dancing, card playing and tableaux to the grief of many of their brethren—

"Therefore voted that we disapprove of the fashionable amusements of promiscuous dancing, card playing and tableaux as unfavorable to the prevalence of sound morality and piety and as inconsistent with a good profession of the Christian religion."

Apparently the Ecclesiastical Society was sympathetic with this viewpoint because we find the following resolution in the society records, passed eight years before: "Voted that the committee be directed to exclude all plays and theatrical exhibitions from this house."

I don't know whether the church members of that day considered female lecturers to fall within the category of amusements or not. At any rate, they were taboo. At a church meeting on August 8th, 1839, the following resolution met with general approval: "That we are opposed to the introduction of female public lecturers into this society by members of this church and to females giving such lectures in it." It is probable that some of these female lecturers were discussing the slavery issue.

Many are the family traditions passed down concerning the rigidity and severity of Sabbath observance. Mrs. Addie Hollister, for example, tells of a man who would hasten his work on Saturday afternoon and hurry home in order that he might shave before sundown. On Sunday it was out of place to play or to laugh. People went about their duties with solemn faces. Mrs. Hollister tells of a woman near the Woodbury line who thought that her neighbor could not be a good Christian because he played so much with his children.

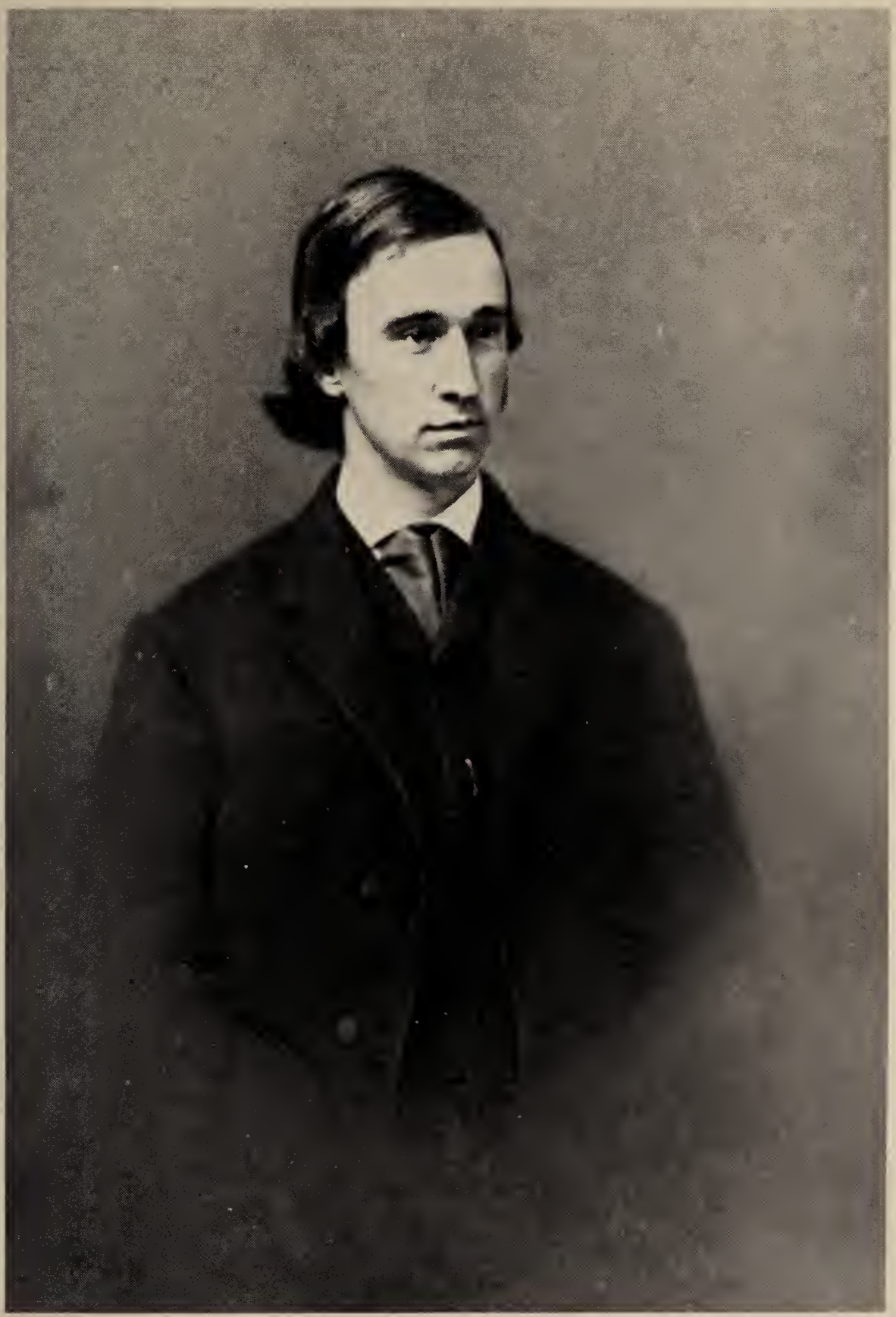
An amusing story is told of John Logan who came to Judea in the early days and was the owner of Sunrise Inn. The church had been recently built under the leadership of Mr. Brinsmade. The members of the church were very proud of it and the deacons of the church were zealous in the fulfillment of their responsibilities. The four-wheeled wagon had recently come into use but was frowned upon by the orthodox members of Connecticut churches who regarded it as luxurious and therefore undesirable. A law was passed forbidding its use upon the Sabbath. When John Logan learned of this he went to a neighboring town and bought the best four-wheeled wagon he could obtain.

On the next Sunday morning he bundled his family into

the wagon and drove to the church with great gusto. Needless to say it created quite a sensation. After the service the deacons reminded him that it was against the law and that he should refrain from using his wagon on Sunday or driving to church. When the following Sunday came the act was repeated, much to the agitation of the deacons. They held a hurried meeting in the corner of the church after the service and hastened to inform him that if he continued to break the law he would be liable to ex-communication.

John Logan replied that such a step was acceptable to him and that they could proceed to do it. However he reminded them that he had supplied the lumber for a section of the church. He asked them to let him know when it would be convenient for him to come and remove from the church the lumber which he had contributed. This immediately put a different complexion on the situation. The shoe was on the other foot, so to speak. Again the deacons conferred together and then solemnly informed John Logan that they would make a private arrangement or treaty with him, thus allowing him to continue to use his wagon on Sundays but that this was a private arrangement and not a general course to be followed by the other members of the church. He could keep his wagon and they would keep the church.

Because of the lack of heat in the church building, Sabba' Day houses had been built in which people could eat their lunches in comparative comfort, to which reference has already been made. Then there came the day when a stove was actually put in the church building. Naturally it created a great sensation and there was much argument about it. The old timers protested at this concession to softness. The story is that when Sunday came, the stove advocates enjoyed it so much that they took off their overcoats. The



WILLIAM H. M. MURRAY
MINISTER
1863–1864

WILLIS S. COLTON
MINISTER
1866–1876

opponents of this radical innovation felt so uncomfortable that they complained of the heat. One or two fainted and had to be carried out. In the meantime, so the story goes, there was no fire within the stove.

There were two members of the church, Brother E and Brother F who were not on good terms but who occupied adjoining pews. It was the custom of Brother E to stand up while the choir was singing, the better to see what was going on, and lean against the pew of Brother F. In his book, "Tioba," Mr. Arthur Colton has written an account of this amusing incident. The rest of the congregation were apparently willing to humor Brother E and allow him to stand up all by himself. But not so Brother F, inasmuch as Brother E leaned against his pew and crowded his shoulder. This went on until mortal flesh could stand it no more. On the next Sunday when the act was repeated, Brother F ran a pin into Brother E. Giving a great shout, Brother E wheeled around, grabbed Brother F by the collar, pulled him into the aisle and shook him shouting, "You stuck me. You stuck me."

On the next Sunday, according to the story, there was a fence in position separating the two pews. A woman of strong convictions and still stronger muscles took hold of the fence and pulled it down. Following the church incident, the two men engaged in physical combat and even had a lawsuit. But in the end, we are informed, peace was re-established.

There were various amusing incidents in connection with the strict observance of the Sabbath. For example it was understood that church members would avoid travel on Sunday. It happened one Sunday that the ministers of the Woodbury and Washington churches exchanged pulpits.

As a result both the dignified gentlemen were arrested for traveling on the Sabbath. No doubt the arrests may have been carried out in the spirit of mischief. Similarly it was expected that members of the church would avoid unnecessary manual labor on the Sabbath. On a certain occasion one of the church members was brought before the church on the complaint that he had worked on Sunday. When the complaint was stated, one of the deacons remarked, "I do not think that Brother G ever worked hard enough to break the Sabbath."

The ringing of the church bell was a frequent cause of contention. Conservative and law-abiding members of the church strenuously objected to the ringing of the church bell except on stated occasions, such as the call to divine worship. This rule was a continuous challenge to the youth of the community who felt it their duty to get around it and help celebrate joyous occasions by an unlawful ringing of the bell.

It was the custom to begin the celebration of the Fourth of July as early as one o'clock in the morning and if possible to ring the church bell at that time. On one such occasion, to prevent this happening, Charles G. Fenn went to the belfry to see that the bell was not rung after midnight. Therefore the Gunnery boys locked him in the belfry. When morning came his wife arrived at the church, searching for him, but as she was quite deaf she did not hear him call to her from the belfry. A little later she returned to the church with the keys and released him from his imprisonment.

On the next Fourth of July the boys again came to ring the bell but found the belfry door locked. While they were considering what to do about it, the same Mr. Fenn who had been locked up the previous year appeared before them. He

had been hidden in one of the pews enjoying the fun. This time the boys agreed the joke was on them, had a good laugh, and returned to their school quarters.

On still another Fourth of July, so the story goes, the bell was unlawfully rung by some one who was caught in the act. As he tried to escape he was seized by one of the church officials who endeavored to keep hold of him. The suspect got away in the darkness but left behind him a stovepipe hat. It happened that there were two residents of the Green who wore stovepipe hats and therefore every one was waiting until the following Sunday to see whose hat was missing. When Sunday came, in marched one of the suspects wearing his stovepipe hat. Immediately people began to accuse the other individual of ringing the church bell. Thus went the village gossip during the week until the following Sunday when, to every one's surprise, in came the other suspect proudly wearing the stovepipe hat. Then reigned confusion worse confounded. Week by week the hat changed hands and week by week the Society's Committee was left in the dark. For many years the other hat remained in the possession of the committee, so we are told, a silent tribute to their inability to discover the culprit.

At another time a mischievous member of the parish climbed up the lightning rod of the church building and tied a string to the rope of the church bell. He then went across to a tree near the house, later known as the "old Red House." Safely hidden in its branches he began to ring the church bell. It was some time before the agitated members of the church were able to discover how it was being done.

Another exciting moment was when the good folks came to church on a Sunday morning and found a farm wagon hanging on the church steeple. This was a prank by certain

boys in the town. The Sunday morning worshipers were properly scandalized.

Many are the amusing stories of New England thrift that have come down from the early days of the church. One such story has to do with the wedding of one of the church members who resided in the area now known as the Judd's Bridge area near Roxbury. After the marriage ceremony was over, the bridegroom sidled up to the pastor and asked, "How much do I owe you?" To which query, the embarrassed minister replied that it was a matter for the bridegroom to decide. Therefore the farmer took out of his pocket a considerable number of three cent and five cent pieces and cupping his hands together remarked to the minister, "Say when." Thereupon slowly, one by one, the thrifty farmer released into the minister's waiting hands the coins that he had taken out of his pocket. But it was a very slow process and it took each three cent or five cent piece a long time to drop. As the minister remarked later to a friend, "I said *when* pretty quick."

CHAPTER NINE

The Church and the Indians

In the museum at the Gunn Memorial Library there are a good many Indian relics and curios. This collection is an indication of the interest in Indian life and culture on the part of the people of Washington. They came by it naturally. One of the first settlers in Woodbury was John Minor who became an interpreter to the Indians. He was also a captain in the militia and a deacon of the First Church of Woodbury. He was one of the group to fix the boundaries of the North Purchase and to sign the finished document in 1724. Early in life John Minor had acquired a knowledge of Indian dialects and was able to converse in them with ease and fluency. As a result, it was the desire of some that he should be set aside to preach the gospel to the Indians, a plan that did not eventuate. But throughout his life he was an able leader in the community and a great help in all matters growing out of the relationship with the Indians. On the whole, this relationship remained peaceful through the years.

In her paper concerning the history of the Indians of this area, Mrs. Charles C. Ford says that they owed their alle-

giance to the Pequot and Mohegan tribes and were known as the "warriors of the rising sun." Woodbury was the first settlement in Litchfield County, being settled in 1672, and was purchased from the Indians in five transactions. For example, several thousand acres were paid for with one hatchet, valued at four shillings, and lead and powder to the amount of ten shillings. In addition to group arrangements there were various settlers who dealt with the Indians on an individual basis and thus secured deeds to property. It is said that David Calhoun, whose family name was given to one of our streets, made such an arrangement, securing a generous tract of land a mile square for a cow and a calf. One deed of land secured from the Indians in 1746 by Samuel Averill has remained in the possession of the Averill family from that day to this.

When Woodbury was settled, the land was in the possession of the Pootatuck tribe of which the most prominent leader was Waramaug. When the land was deeded to the settlers, it is said that he reserved for himself a reservation of about two thousand acres in the northern section near Mount Tom and Lake Waramaug that now bears his name. Farther to the east and north was another tribe of Indians called the Bantams and the Shepaug River was named after one of their chieftains.

The section of Washington now called Romford was an Indian battleground in olden times. Many arrowheads have been discovered there. On a hillside near the farm that was owned by Deacon Baldwin was the Indian burial ground where the dead were buried in a sitting position, facing the east.

Waramaug was a man of unusual qualities and endeavored to serve his people to the best of his abilities. Rev.

Daniel Boardman of the New Milford Colony instructed him in the Christian faith and it is said that Waramaug passed away as a believing Christian about 1735. The story goes that Waramaug's wife was opposed to the white man's religion and one day while Parson Boardman was praying with him she sent for an Indian medicine man who began a powwow near the door. The minister kept on raising his voice so that the sick man could hear him above the uproar. Each grew louder and louder, the minister resolved not to be silenced by such a competitor. A crowd gathered. The minister said afterward that he prayed fully three hours before he was allowed to come off the victor. The medicine man finally gave an unearthly yell, took to his heels, and kept running until he reached the Housatonic.

The interest of the people of Washington in the Indians was doubtless stimulated by the establishment of a school in nearby Cornwall for the education of foreign youth. This school was founded in 1817 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. It became famous throughout this part of the country and to it came pupils from many lands. There was Henry Obookiah of the Hawaiian Islands who became a devout Christian, translating parts of the scriptures into his own language, and dying at an early age in the year 1818. To the school also came Killekeenah, a chief of the Cherokee nation of Indians, located in Georgia. The young chief took the name of a distinguished United States Congressman, Elias Boudinot, who had befriended him in various ways. At Cornwall Elias fell in love with Harriet Gold, the daughter of a prominent resident of Cornwall. In spite of the sensation caused by the engagement, the young couple were married in Cornwall on May 1st, 1826, and went to Georgia to live. Mrs. Boudinot lived

among the Indians for ten years, laboring for their uplift and active in Christian work. These activities and the care of six children were too much for her and she passed away after a short illness on August 15th, 1836. An excellent account of the life of Elias Boudinot has been written by a granddaughter, Mary Brinsmade Church.

The most significant contribution made by the Washington church for the welfare of the Indians, however, was through the brothers Samuel and Gideon Pond. They came of an old colonial family which came to New England about 1630. The sixth in line from the original pioneer was named Edward and married a sister of Rev. Adoniram Judson, Sr., settling in Woodbury. Edward's eldest son, Elnathan Judson, married Sarah Hollister of Washington and to them were born Samuel William Pond, April 10, 1808, and Gideon Hollister Pond, June 30, 1810. There were seven other children in the family. When thirteen years old, Samuel became apprenticed to the clothier's trade with a Captain Moody who lived near the Shepaug River, a short distance from Steep Rock. Gideon for a time was apprenticed to a carpenter but later lived with a married sister, Mrs. Jonathan Hine, where he worked as a farmer.

It was during the revival of 1831 that both Samuel and Gideon passed through a deep spiritual experience. With over a hundred others, they joined the First Church and for each of them it was the commencement of a new life. From that moment the inspiring motive for each of them was a keen desire to serve Christ and an eager love for their fellow men. Samuel was unable to do manual work because of a long illness. He desired to find a more needy field than was afforded by New England. Hence it was agreed that Samuel

should go west and if he found a promising field, later send for Gideon.

In March, 1833, he set out, going by boat from New Haven to New York, thence by boat to the coast of New Jersey from which landing place he went by stage to Pittsburgh. From Pittsburgh he took passage down the Ohio. During this journey he fell sick with cholera, from which he recovered. He stopped at Galena, Illinois, where he spent the winter, busying himself in Sunday School work and other activities. One day in Galena he went into a liquor store to protest against the sale of liquor. He became a friend of the proprietor and from him learned something about the Dakota Indians. After thinking the matter over prayerfully, Samuel wrote to his brother, Gideon, suggesting that the latter join him in the spring and undertake with him an independent mission to the Sioux who were also called the Dakota Indians. The hardships Samuel must have undergone in his travels west may be inferred from a phrase in one of his letters to Gideon: "Since I left you, I have met little calculated to attach me to this world but much to remind me that we have no continuing city or abiding place."

Moreover he was not impressed by the tone of community life in frontier communities as the following reference to Galena shows: "This is one of the strongholds of the prince of darkness. It has appeared to me like the gate of hell. The worst kind of vices prevail to a high degree. I believe the church consists of about seventeen members yet I fear they exert but little influence on the world around them. Drunkenness prevails to a great extent. Gambling houses are openly kept. Swearing is common, even among children."

The following April Gideon arrived at Galena, bringing

his entire savings of three hundred dollars. With a scant amount of clothing, this represented the material resources of the two volunteers. Their plan was to go among the roving tribes of Indians, without any fixed abode, and live as the Indians themselves lived. Both men were well fitted for the extreme privations they were to undergo. They had their health and their faith. When they embarked on the river steamer, in May, 1834, a friend remarked, "You are just throwing yourselves away."

It would be out of place in this history of the church to attempt to relate in detail the story of what Samuel and Gideon were able to accomplish on behalf of the Indians in the north prairie region. Readers may find the detailed narrative in the book "Two Volunteer Missionaries" by S. W. Pond, Jr. We will confine ourselves in this brief chapter to a few of the highlights.

The first contact the brothers had with the Dakota Indians was at Fort Snelling, located on the high point of land between the Mississippi and the Minnesota rivers. This was the headquarters of the Indian agent, Major Taliaferro. Immediately Samuel and Gideon started to learn the Dakota language and become acquainted with their habits of life.

Since the brothers were in the Indian country without any authority, Samuel Pond had an interview with Major Bliss, commandant of the fort, to whom he gave a testimonial letter from General Brinsmade of Washington, Conn. When the major mentioned that a nearby group of Indians possessed oxen and a plow but no one able to do the plowing, Samuel volunteered to do it. In a letter dated May 25th, Mr. Pond tells of this episode: "I stayed last week with a band about nine miles south of this place where I

went to help them break up planting ground and as I had no other shelter, I slept in the house of the chief and ate with him. He had two wives and a houseful of children. He appeared to be much pleased with the plowing. They have never had any done before." The chief referred to was the famous Big Thunder, the father of Little Crow who was involved in the massacre of 1862.

In spite of many hardships and the necessity of adjusting themselves to extremely primitive conditions of life, the two brothers were filled with faith and buoyant hope. As Gideon wrote home to his friends: "God has prepared the way and here is a large field, ripe already to the harvest. I ask you and all my Christian friends in Washington, yes, that dear church to which I belong, to pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest who will not faint."

Seven miles northwest of Fort Snelling and four miles west of St. Anthony's Falls, now in the suburbs of Minneapolis, lies Lake Calhoun, named for John C. Calhoun. By the side of this lake the brothers built a log cabin of two rooms. The dimensions were twelve feet by sixteen and eight feet high. The roof was made of the bark of trees fastened with strings. Major Taliaferro contributed the single window, and the cash cost of the building was one shilling for the nails used about the door. The timbers were large green oak logs, the cracks being filled in with clay. The formal opening consisted of a scripture reading and prayer, the banquet consisting of flour and water.

The chief interest of the brothers was to acquire a mastery of the Dakota language as soon as possible and to reduce it to a written form. With a good deal of ingenuity they constructed an alphabet which has since been called the

Pond alphabet and which became the basis of the written language. The winter of 1834-35 was a severe one and much wood had to be cut. Food was simple, being mainly pork and flour with occasional venison steak. But nothing was allowed to interfere with their language study. Through their efforts, an Indian grammar, a lexicon and a translation of various books of the Bible were later published in the Indian language.

Life was anything but dull for Samuel and Gideon. Samuel Pond, for example, joined a party of Indians on their early winter hunt for deer. The group was rather large, consisting of fifty men, with their wives and children. Speaking of the journey, he said many years later: "To me it was no pleasure excursion. I carried no book except the Bible. The society of the Indians and dogs was not always agreeable and they were not the only inhabitants of the tents. More than once in winter weather, I have gone to a distance from the tents, and kindling a fire, stripped off my garments and held them in the blaze until I thought the inhabitants were singed out of them. But these annoyances were endurable and this seemed to be the quickest way to become acquainted with the language, habits and character of the Indians."

In the spring of 1836 the two brothers went to live at the mission station at Lac Qui Parle where they continued their study of the Dakota language and their translations of portions of the New Testament. On November 1st, 1837, Gideon was married by Rev. Stephen R. Riggs to Miss Sarah Poage, in the presence of several missionaries and a number of Indians. Mrs. Pond was a woman of unassuming character who lived an exemplary Christian life.

In the meantime Samuel received a flattering offer of a

partnership in the fur trade from Mr. H. H. Sibley, the head of the trade in that area. There was nothing to prevent his accepting the offer and one might have thought that he would have accepted an opening to make himself financially independent. His heart was in Christian work, however, and he turned it down.

That same year Samuel returned to Washington, Connecticut, to study for the ministry. He went by the lake route to Buffalo and thence by canal, a journey of six weeks from Fort Snelling to Washington. He studied theology under the pastor of the church, Rev. Gordon Hayes, and was given instruction in Greek by a cousin, Hiram Hollister, who became a distinguished lawyer and was sent as minister to Haiti by President Lincoln.

On March 4th, 1837, Samuel Pond was ordained by the Litchfield South Association as a missionary to the Sioux Indians, the service being held in the Washington church, a little over five years after his public profession of faith. The church was crowded with relatives and friends. They would gladly have assumed the burden of his support but since he expected to work in connection with missionaries of the American Board, he declined their offer. He immediately set out for the West and his chosen work on the shores of Lake Harriet. He continued translation of parts of the Bible into the Sioux language. And on Nov. 22nd, 1838, there occurred the first marriage of white people in the present area of Minneapolis.

The bride was Miss Cordelia Eggleston, a teacher at the mission station. The bridegroom was Rev. Samuel W. Pond of the Dakota Mission. Among the guests were officers from Fort Snelling and their wives. Dr. Emerson, the surgeon of the fort, was present with his wife. They were the owners

of Dred Scott, the subject of Judge Taney's famous decision. At that time, Dred Scott was a slave at Fort Snelling. After the wedding the young couple set up housekeeping in a small room over the schoolroom. Their belongings were simple, their first teapot being an old oilcan.

During these years there was a continuing feud between the Dakotas and the Ojibway Indians, in spite of the efforts of the missionaries and the fort garrison to bring about a reconciliation. The brothers had friendly contacts with both groups. On July 3rd, 1839, there was a massacre of Ojibways by the Sioux on the Rum River and simultaneously on the St. Croix. The Sioux killed about ninety-five of their enemies, losing seventeen warriors. Many of these victims were known personally to the brothers.

In the years that followed, the brothers were busy with a multitude of duties. New mission stations were opened and schools started. Quarrels were settled and hardships endured. Often the brothers were in danger as when a drunken Indian assaulted Samuel with a knife. It was life in the raw and the Indians were primitive in the extreme. The following entry in Gideon's diary well illustrates this point: "Some of the Indians had a frolic last night and one bit off the nose of another. The son of the one who lost his nose shot the one who bit it off but probably did not hurt him very much. I am acquainted with some who have had their fingers and thumbs bitten off on such occasions—fine sport but it sometimes causes unpleasant feelings among them."

In October, 1852, while driving down hill in a sleigh, the horses became unmanageable and Samuel's right ankle was broken by being crushed against a stump. Since no surgeon was available, Samuel set the broken bones himself and made a splint. This accident was soon followed by an attack of

lung fever. It was a long time before the broken ankle became strong again.

In that same year a treaty was signed between the Indians of that area and Governor Ramsey. Many chiefs of the Dakotas were present and Gideon was the interpreter. By the treaty all the Indian lands belonging to the Sioux were ceded to the United States except a reservation located near the Yellow Medicine River. The Indians were to receive $220,000, and annuities of $30,000 per year for a period of thirty years. The Dakotas were moved by the Government to their reservation, leaving their hereditary hunting grounds with heavy hearts. The Indians realized that they were powerless to resist the encroachments of the white race.

The problem facing the Pond brothers was whether they should also go to the reservation to continue their work of nearly a score of years. They finally decided in the negative, disbelieving in the benefits of the treaty. It was a decision that they never regretted. They decided to remain in the area and work among the white settlers who were coming there rapidly. Around Oak Grove there was a rural population and near the St. Anthony's Falls a small city sprang up. Religious services were held in the new town by Gideon and on May 22, 1853, he organized the first Christian church in Minneapolis. It became a Presbyterian church and to it Gideon ministered as pastor for twenty years, leaving this life on Jan. 20, 1878.

Samuel, in the meanwhile, became the pastor of a small church at Shakopee, Minnesota, consisting of ten members. His first wife had died while on a visit to Washington in 1852. He had married again, a schoolmate of his early years, Miss Rebecca Smith. For thirteen years Samuel served as pastor of the Shakopee church. In 1856 a building had been

erected, largely at the pastor's expense. During the thirteen years of his pastorate the church never reached a self-supporting status. It was hard work but Samuel gloried in it and rendered a faithful stewardship. He continued to read his Bible in the original Hebrew and Greek. It is said that when he was sixty years of age he began the study of German. In his later years he did considerable literary work. A volume of his poems has been published, entitled, "Legends of the Dakotas." He lived to the ripe old age of eighty-three, his mind clear and his judgment sound until the end. He could look back to a life of creative usefulness. In the words of S. W. Pond, Jr.: "The unpaid labors of volunteer missionaries of the American Board have done more to solve the Indian question, so far as the Dakotas are concerned, than has been accomplished by the costly experiments of the Government."

On May 6th, 1934, about five hundred persons gathered at a chapel in Fort Snelling to celebrate the centennial of the arrival of the Pond brothers. A few weeks later the Minnesota Historical Society presented a pageant depicting the lives of the young pioneers among the Sioux. The principal speaker at the centennial was E. Frazier, a grandson of one of the four hundred prisoners, captured after a massacre, and later pardoned by President Lincoln. These prisoners had been ministered to and baptized by the Pond brothers who had labored for their freedom. Mr. Frazier said that most of the Sioux Indians now in North Dakota were church members. At the centennial they sang hymns written in the Sioux language by the Pond brothers. Thus their work goes on. The members of the Washington church and the relatives and descendants of Samuel and Gideon

GEORGE S. THRALL

MINISTER

1877–1881

have every reason to be proud of their achievements. Harold S. Pond of Grand Forks, North Dakota, and Mrs. Ruth Pond Hollister of Washington, Connecticut, are lineal descendants of Noah and Rebecca Pond who were the brother and the sister of Samuel and Gideon.

CHAPTER TEN

The Slavery Issue

During the pastorate of Rev. Gordon Hayes the great question before the nation was that dealing with slavery. It was an issue that reached into every village and hamlet of the country, both north and south. Feelings ran high. Friendships were broken. Political decisions were made in accordance with either a slavery or an anti-slavery bias. New England became a center for an Abolition Movement which attained great power but which was also fought with tremendous bitterness. William Lloyd Garrison was the editor of "The Liberator" and he had many followers, some of whom lived in Washington, Connecticut. Under such circumstances it was impossible for this church to escape being involved in the slavery issue. The members had to take sides in one way or another.

In the church record, for example, dated February 7th, 1843, there is the following note: "The discussion on the subject of slavery was continued through the day. Whereupon it was voted: That while we regard, as we have ever done, the system of American slavery as a great national and moral evil, which ought to be abolished, we have no de-

sire to change the Confession of Faith or the Covenant of this church by the introduction of any new tests of piety not in use in the churches with which we are consociated; and that we feel solemnly bound to recognize those who adhere to this Confession and Covenant as believers in Christ and to exercise toward them the kindest affection and regard."

One of the leaders of the Abolition Movement in Washington was Daniel Platt, the father of Senator Orville H. Platt. His home was a station on the underground railway. Many a trembling negro refugee would come to his home under cover of darkness to be fed and cared for and sent on his way to Canada. The usual route was by way of New Milford to Washington and then on to General Tuttle's home in Torrington or Dr. Vaill's house on the Wolcottville road. While in Washington it was customary for the slaves to remain at the Platt farm but a short time although now and then an escaped slave would remain there for several weeks.

Another leader of the abolitionists in Washington was John Gunn, the eldest brother of Frederick William Gunn who founded the Gunnery school. It is said that John was a gentle, simple and friendly soul. By nature he was modest and shrank from the public gaze. But concerning the issue of slavery he felt deeply and became an uncompromising foe. He surprised even his friends with his bold and aggressive championship of the lowly slave. With a small group of others, he planned and worked and fought the anti-slavery battle through to a successful conclusion in the town of Washington. But in the doing of it, he came into conflict with the pastor of the church, Mr. Hayes, and with many other members of the church.

Mr. Hayes evidently regarded the abolitionists as a spe-

cies of heretics. With complete sincerity he set out to oppose the spread of the heresy in every way in his power. Sunday after Sunday he preached against Abolition and all its works, attacking it on political and patriotic and religious grounds. In "The Master of the Gunnery," George A. Hickox tells in some detail of this struggle between Mr. Hayes and the abolitionists. Reference is also made to it in the excellent biography of Orville H. Platt by Louis A. Coolidge. There is no question concerning Mr. Hayes' honest belief that the abolitionists were trouble-makers and that they should be opposed. He quoted scripture to prove that slavery had biblical sanction. He went out of his way to attack the abolitionists and in this he had the support of the majority of his congregation. This opposition even went as far as excommunication.

In the church records, dated Nov. 3, 1843, there is an apparently harmless item as follows: "Voted that Deacon Sherman P. Hollister, Daniel Calhoun and Herman Baldwin be a committee to visit Brother John Gunn in reference to errors of faith and practice."

A further entry in the record of the church reads, dated January 6, 1844: "The church met. The committee appointed to visit Brother John Gunn reported that they had called upon Brother Gunn and that he refused to receive them as a committee of the church. Whereupon voted that Brother John Gunn be cited to appear before the church to answer for his errors in faith and practice on Friday March 1st."

The final curtain falls on John Gunn's active participation in the affairs of the church, as revealed in the following item of March 4th: "The church met. The charges with their specifications were sustained. Whereupon voted that in view

of his errors in faith and practice, John Gunn is no longer a member of this church. Voted that his excommunication be made public."

It must have taken a great deal of courage for men like John Gunn and Daniel Platt to stand out against the community and advocate what at first was a most unpopular cause. Very few people could remain neutral when feelings ran so high. Frederick Gunn had taken little interest in the early stages of the struggle. Occasionally he argued with his brother John about the rights and wrongs of slavery but was not a strong partisan. Soon, however, he began to read abolition books and papers and it was not long before he came to the conclusion that the crusade against slavery was sound. With his natural honesty and courage, he too became a leader of the anti-slavery side. Since Frederick Gunn was not a church member, there was no question of his being excommunicated. But the issue between Mr. Frederick Gunn and Mr. Hayes was clear-cut and under no concealment. The minister considered Mr. Gunn a heretic and the latter regarded the minister as a bigot. Most of the church members stood by Mr. Hayes in his position, with the exception of the abolitionists.

The deep feelings aroused by Mr. Hayes' active participation in matters of a social and political nature, may be seen in a letter sent to him by a member of the church, dated October 3, 1835. It reads as follows: "Having viewed our past elections, I wish to be permitted to ask one question, and for fear I should not see you while it was on my mind, I thought to commit it to writing. The question is this: 'How many political and anti-Masonic ministers will it take to make one minister of the Gospel?' "

One of the incidents that greatly increased the bitterness

of the anti-slavery conflict occurred in August, 1839. Mr. and Mrs. Daniel G. Platt and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis A. Canfield drove to Gaylord's Bridge and brought back Miss Abbey Kelly who was a prominent speaker on the slavery issue. She remained in the village of Washington for about two weeks, speaking before abolition gatherings. For many conservative people of that time such a procedure was little less than scandalous. The members of the church could not ignore it. At a meeting on August 8th, 1839, convened in consequence of a notice of a meeting of the Washington Anti-slavery Society at which it was said a female would lecture, the following resolution was passed: "Resolved that we are opposed to the introduction of female public lecturers into this society by members of this church and to females giving such lectures in it."

The incident aroused tremendous indignation in the pastor, Mr. Hayes. He preached a sermon from the following text: "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."

In this astonishing sermon, Mr. Hayes made many unpleasant insinuations, referring to female lecturers traveling alone night and day, intimating that Miss Kelly's character was not all that it should be. As soon as the benediction was pronounced, John Gunn arose in the gallery and called out that the charges of Mr. Hayes were false. To make matters worse, Miss Kelly was present and heard the

sermon. As the preacher was leaving the church, she walked up to him and said, "Gordon Hayes, you have said things most injurious to my character. I hope God will forgive you."

After such an episode it is not surprising that the two factions found it difficult to worship together. It was not long before the abolitionists withdrew and organized a church of their own. Their secession was followed by excommunication. They met here and there in various towns throughout the county. Frequently no building was open to them, not even a private home. They met in barns or out in the open. Often they were threatened with violence and were looked upon by the majority in the community as fanatics and cranks.

It was during this period of intense agitation that Frederick W. Gunn began his career as a teacher in Washington. His active championship of the cause of Abolition naturally had an adverse effect upon the course of his school. Parents who were members of the church and who sided with the minister withdrew their children from Mr. Gunn's school. Possibly some did so because of community pressure. To a considerable degree Mr. Gunn was ostracized. Yet, be it said to his credit, the loss of patronage did not swerve him from his course. It may well be that he became a little defiant of public sentiment. But he did not become embittered. He continued to work for the cause in which he believed.

In 1843-44, the number of pupils under Mr. Gunn's care was reduced to eleven, presumably the children of abolitionists. The trustees of the "Academy" had prohibited his use of the building and therefore he fitted up a room in his sister's house as a school-room. In the year 1844-45 there were only nine pupils in the school. Mr. Gunn had already

spent the two years of 1837-39 teaching in the Academy in New Preston. He was now invited by his New Preston friends to return there and teach. They sympathized with him in his persecution. As stated in the "Master of the Gunnery," "they proposed to show Judea that Mr. Gunn could teach school in New Preston even if he *was* an abolitionist."

When the news spread of the proposed step, his opponents in Judea did everything they could to prevent it. His opinions were quoted as showing that it was dangerous to entrust youth to his care. Many of his statements concerning religion or the church were deliberately exaggerated. References were made to his heresy or infidelity. Some of those who had planned to send him pupils were dissuaded from doing so. But his friends stood by him. The children of abolitionists living in surrounding towns came to his school and it was a success, continuing through the years 1845 to 1847.

The bitterness aroused was so intense that it even had an unhappy influence upon Mr. Gunn's courtship. During the period of teaching in New Preston, his summers were passed in Judea. From his college days he had felt an attachment for Miss Abigail I. Brinsmade, the daughter of General Daniel B. Brinsmade. General Brinsmade was too liberal a man to close the door of his home to the visits of Frederick Gunn, as did some of the other homes in Judea. While he believed that slavery was wrong, he also felt that it was not right for the abolitionists to attack the church. It was with a sense of loyalty, therefore, that General Brinsmade stood by Mr. Hayes as the leader of the church even though he felt that Mr. Hayes was too severe in his views of the abolitionists. Nor could General Brinsmade be unmindful of the rather heretical opinions of Mr. Gunn concerning religious

matters. Hence while Mr. Gunn was not excluded from the family circle, he was not encouraged as a suitor. Although meetings were difficult, Mr. Gunn and Miss Brinsmade carried on a correspondence for several years. They became engaged but the engagement was kept secret until the consent of General and Mrs. Brinsmade was secured, when it was made public.

Apparently this engagement added fuel to the fire. Frederick Gunn was now the prospective son-in-law of General Brinsmade and the Brinsmade family was one of the most influential in Washington. Mr. Hayes continued to brand Mr. Gunn as a dangerous man and one to be shunned by the community. It was natural that the Brinsmade family should begin to resent it.

Whatever may be said of Mr. Hayes, he was a man of courage and very aggressive. He now carried the attack further. Mary Brinsmade, Abbie's younger sister, had established a successful young ladies' Seminary in Judea. She had graduated from the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in 1846 and had returned to Washington, filled with a desire for some form of useful service. She was a born teacher and therefore in the fall of 1846, she had gathered a group of sixteen girls together. She began the school in her father's house whose site was in front of the present location of Brownley Inn. The number of pupils increased rapidly and within two years they moved to the ballroom of "Uncle Andrew Hine's" house, which later became the "White Inn." There is an excellent sketch of the Judea Female Seminary written by Miss Amy Kenyon and kept in the Washington Library.

In September, 1848, the school moved to the second story in the building which was occupied by the Methodist Church.

A few of the girls boarded around in the different families. One girl was from Alabama, another from Ohio and others from nearby states. The school followed a rather advanced type of curriculum, modeled somewhat upon that of Mount Holyoke. In addition to academic studies, there was needlework and nature study. Calisthenics were adopted as a school exercise and occasionally, we are told, pupils engaged in parlor dancing. On one or two occasions, the company at General Brinsmade's were entertained by simple tableaux in which a niece of the General took part.

Suddenly, without warning, Mr. Hayes preached a sermon denouncing calisthenics, promiscuous dancing and tableaux as being thoroughly evil and in the service of Satan. It was an open and direct attack, in the style of the attacks against the abolitionists. Mr. Hayes had gone too far. The friends of General Brinsmade and his family rallied to their support. There was no movement against the Female Seminary. Instead, the majority of the church concluded that Mr. Hayes was the one who was disturbing the community peace. He was given six months' notice after which his connection with the church was dissolved. With the departure of Mr. Hayes, the tensions within the church and community gradually healed. The abolitionists were invited to reunite with the church but some declined to do so. They were no longer derided or shunned. Mr. Gunn was restored to public esteem and the slavery issue ceased to divide the community.

In view of Mr. Hayes' long pastorate, it is clear that he had the respect and affection of a great many people in his congregation. His lengthy reply to the notice given by the church is a touching document. In it he commended to the church and society the gospel of Christ as the light of eter-

nal life. It is said that on subsequent reflection, Mr. Hayes modified his views concerning the anti-slavery movement and came to feel more kindly toward the abolitionists, and especially toward Mr. Gunn. The latter was deeply touched many years later to learn that Mr. Hayes entertained for him only kindly feelings.

The following sketch of Rev. Gordon Hayes, written by Deacon S. S. Baldwin, was given at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the church and is worthy of recording: "The Rev. Gordon Hayes was a native of Granby in this state, graduated at Yale in the class of 1825, studied theology at Andover, preached for a Presbyterian church in northern New York one year, came to Washington as a candidate on the recommendation of Dr. Porter, in August, 1829, preached four Sabbaths, received a unanimous call from the church and society, and was installed as pastor October 28, 1829. He was a man possessed of superior talent, of an ardent temperament; a deep student of human nature, and good common sense. He was invited at different times to preach before the General Association and other public bodies. For years he was a leader and counselor of the Litchfield South Consociation. His reply to the protest of Dr. Hewett in the case of Judge Groves of Bridgeport, brought before the Consociation at Harwinton in 1850, would rank him among the first lawyers of the state. His health and the inadequacy of his salary led him to engage in farming on a small scale. He became a model farmer. His sermons were short, crisp, and practical, conveying the most in the fewest words of any man I ever heard. He loved revivals, and was an excellent counselor in such seasons, easily approached, and very clear in his instruction. Two hundred and fifty-four persons were added to the church

under his ministry, which extended over a period of twenty-three years. He was dismissed by the society January 15, 1852, according to the terms of settlement, which were that the pastoral relation should be dissolved, by either party giving to the other six months' notice. This was his last pastorate. From here he removed to Bennington, Vt., where he was teacher of an academy for several years. From thence he removed to Galesburg, Ill., and from thence to Iowa, where he died among his children, some twenty-three years since, at the age of eighty-three years."

At a church meeting, held on March 8th, 1852, it was resolved to send a call to Rev. Ephraim Lyman to become the minister of the church. In this call the members of the society concurred. The church had already had some knowledge of Mr. Lyman and the members were impressed by his abilities. Mr. Lyman felt impelled to decline the call. On June 10th, the church passed another resolution requesting Mr. Lyman to reconsider his opinion. On June 25th, Mr. Lyman sent word from Plymouth, Connecticut, that he would accept the call. Apparently one condition of Mr. Lyman's acceptance was that the church and society should build a parsonage for the minister. This was agreed to and the work taken in hand. Up to this time the ministers of the church had possessed their own homes, this arrangement being part of each settlement. The society appointed a committee of five to select a proper location and to give out the contract. The building was finished in due course and from that day to this has been occupied by the successive ministers of the church.

There is an amusing story which would indicate that when the parsonage was completed it was not entirely weather-proof. The story is that during a severe snow storm

a good deal of snow drifted in through the cracks in the attic. Therefore the society sued the contracting builder for damages on the ground that the building had not been properly finished. Mr. Lyman gave his testimony in the court, telling of the number of baskets of snow which he had actually removed from the attic. It was such a tall story that in spite of Mr. Lyman's ministerial standing, the judge was unable to believe it and the church lost the case.

Under Mr. Lyman's able and devoted leadership, the last vestiges of the abolition controversy were removed. Once again the church picked up the threads of harmonious cooperation and was united in spirit. Mr. Lyman was pastor of the church for eleven years, leaving in the year 1863. He was a man of affairs, taking an interest in everything pertaining to the public welfare. He was a fearless preacher and faithful pastor.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Civil War Days

While the slavery issue was the most lively topic agitating the mind of Washington during the years preceding the Civil War, there were other events taking place of great significance to the people of the community.

For one thing the town continued to grow. New roads were being built and new houses erected. Virgin territory was converted into farm lands. Each year the process went on. In her account of the old highways, Mrs. A. C. Titus speaks of the gradual transition of the Indian trail into a bridle path, then a crude cart road, and finally into a public highway. The early highways were laid out by corporations and toll was collected from travelers to pay the expenses. Toll gates were established at different places and at each gate there was a man to collect the toll. The gate was a pole across the road, the pole being fastened to a post at one end by a spike which turned on itself. The toll price for a horse was six and a quarter cents and for a team was twelve and a half cents. The first turnpike survey of the Woodbury and Washington Turnpike Company was made in the year 1804.

In general the roads of the town were laid out from east to west over the hills and from north and south through the river valleys. The stagecoach from New Haven to Albany passed along the road that runs through Nettleton Hollow. The main traveled roads from Boston to Poughkeepsie skirted the northern section of the town. The surveying and building of these roads and highways required a great deal of time, effort and expense. A severe flood on Nov. 13th, 1853 brought destruction to a large number of the roads, bridges and dams located throughout the town.

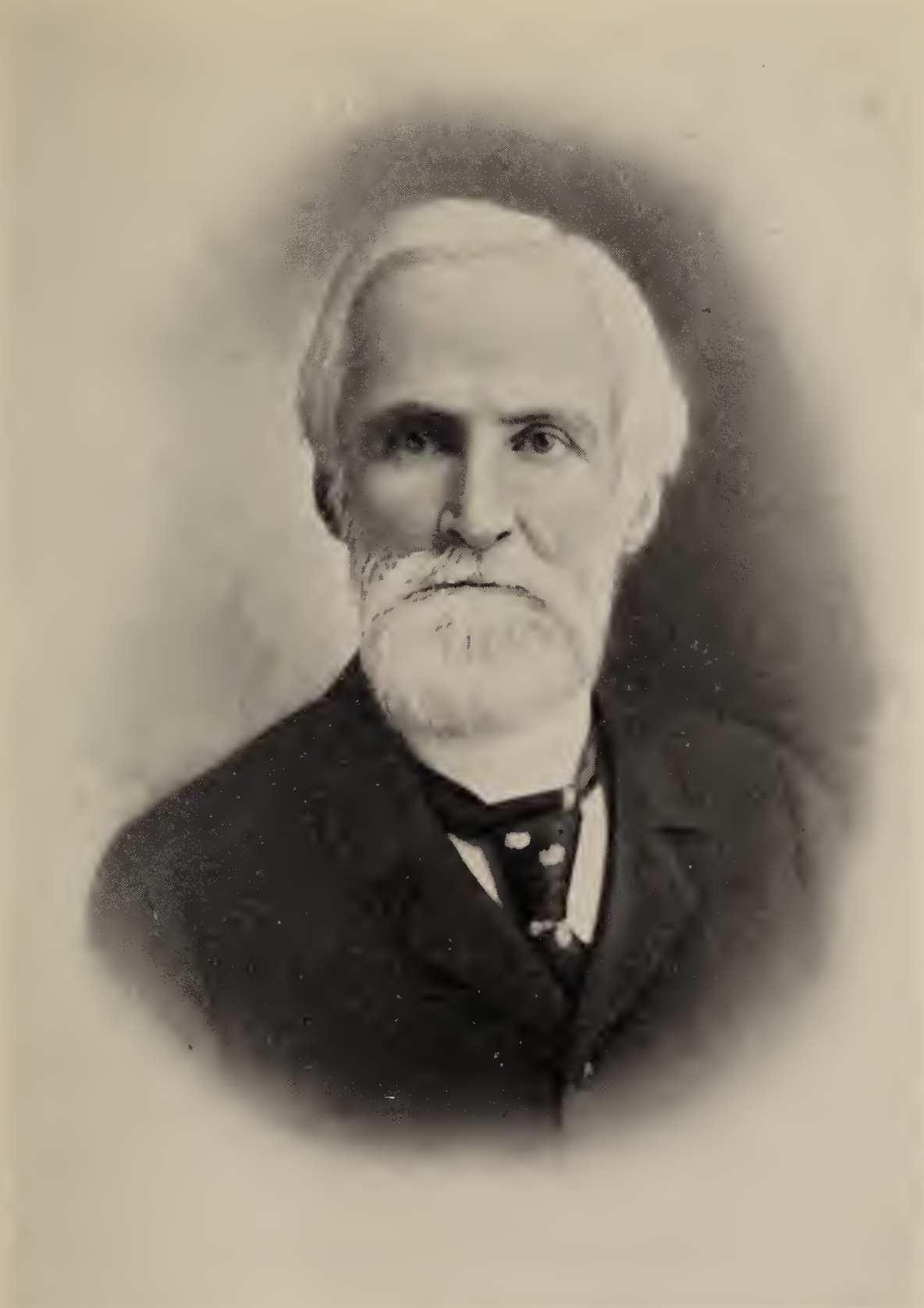
Many traditions have come down through the years connected with Sabba' Day Lane. This road had the distinction of being the subject of a poem written by Mr. E. K. Rossiter, a life-long summer resident of Washington. Tradition has it that Sabba' Day Lane extended from Davies Hollow, now Romford, where there was an Episcopal Church, to the Congregational Church on the Green. It is said that the houses along this road were all closed on Sunday while the families were away at church. Mrs. Addie Hollister quotes Charles G. Fenn as recollecting that seven deacons lived on this lane and that several others drove along it on their way to church.

Between the years 1820 and 1860 Washington was the home of a number of small industries, the water power being obtained from the brooks and streams flowing through the town. An account of these old time industries, written by Edith H. Rossiter, is among the town history papers. A number of these industries were on the Aspetuck, the outlet of Lake Waramaug. It is rather strange that there were only a few mills on the Shepaug above Washington. At Woodville there was an iron foundry owned by Frederick Chittendon and there were sawmills both in Davies Hollow

and at the foot of Goose Hill. Simeon Mitchell operated a saw and cider mill near the present site of the John Sheehy house and it was here that Deacon David Punderson made his cheese boxes. Truman Hickox built a sawmill with a large wheel on Kirby brook about 1840.

The section now called Washington Depot was known as Factory Hollow from the thirties to the sixties because of the mills in that locality. There was a stone mill built in 1833 for the manufacture of cotton cloth and owned by a stock company. There was a mill built by John Titus which was planned to produce clocks but which eventually was used for the manufacture of handles for axes, hammers and sledges. It is said that the mill sent a good many handles to California for the miners' picks at the time of the gold rush. On the west bank of the river stood the saw and grist mill built by Smith Platt in which the timber for the Methodist Church on the Green was sawed, the timber being the gift of the miller, Armand Olmstead, who had bought the mill in 1835.

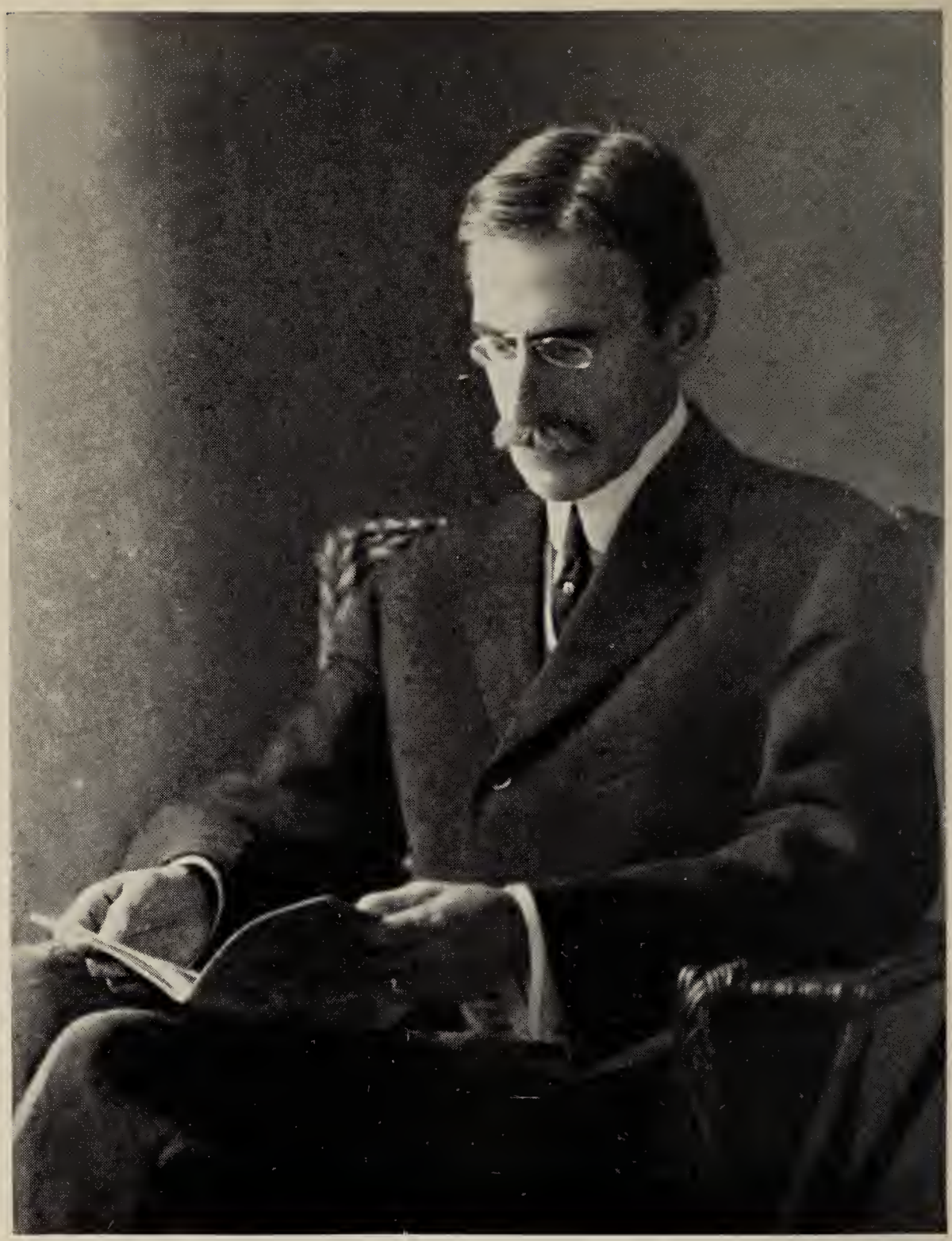
There were few industries on the Green because of the lack of water power. Nathaniel Galpin made woolen hats and dried them on the sunny slope near the present home of Dr. Wersebe. Deacon Waite Abernathy who lived in a house on the site of the present Bartlett Dormitory of the Gunnery School made oxcarts in a shop south of his home. The deacon lived to be almost a hundred and became very deaf in his later years. Therefore it became his custom to stand on the platform near the pulpit to hear the sermon. We are told that Mr. Colton, the minister, rather liked the arrangement and had a chair placed for him on the platform. Mr. Colton often made gestures but was careful not to hit the elderly deacon. Deacon Abernathy was very honest and it



WILLIAM CRAWFORD

MINISTER

1882–1883



HERBERT B. TURNER

MINISTER

1884–1892

was his custom to return medicine bottles given him by Dr. Brown. He once made a special trip to return a cork. In her Town History Paper, Edith H. Rossiter says that when he was about eighty years old, Deacon Abernathy sold his house to Mr. Erastus Hurlbut who gave him a life lease on it and each year, on his birthday, he would apologize to Mr. Hurlbut for living so long. When Dr. Orlando Brown prescribed some spirits for him in his last years, he bought a half pint of whiskey but expressed the fear that he would die a drunkard.

Elijah Woodruff had a tannery and made shoes in his house on Church Hill. Mr. James Aspinwall, who lived in several different houses at various times, also was a shoemaker. There were a number of blacksmith shops located in various parts of the town. There was a lime kiln owned by Mr. Charles Whittlesey which produced from 600 to 1000 barrels annually. Potash Hill received its name from the fact that potash was made at the foot of the hill. Maple sugar was made in Nettleton Hollow, originally called Pork Hollow, a name given to the valley when the people of Southbury drove their hogs there to escape the foraging raids of the British soldiers encamped at Danbury during the Revolutionary War. Still other industries included the production of pig iron, the making of cotton twine, the quarrying of marble, the tanning of skins and furniture making.

The industrial life of Washington reached its peak about 1850, due to various causes. The manufacture of pig iron was stopped because of the high cost of bringing the ore such a distance. The decline of the marble industry was largely due to the increasing competition with Vermont and New York State where marble of a better quality was avail-

able. Similarly the making of cotton twine became impossible after the beginning of the Civil War because it was not possible to secure cotton from the south. And with the increase of factories in larger centers, it was natural that the industrial life of smaller towns should gradually diminish.

Another noticeable change in the years preceding the Civil War was the increasing use of horse-drawn vehicles. The old custom of riding on horseback, with the use of the pillion, was given up. Now it became a case of wagons and carriages and buggies of various kinds. This trend made it necessary to organize the Washington Horse Shed Company which was done on October 19th, 1857. When people came to church it was a great convenience if there was a place to hitch the horse and if there could be some protection from inclement weather.

A committee of three was appointed to draw up a constitution for the Association and was composed of Seth S. Logan, H. Baldwin and Charles Ford. At a meeting on October 22nd, the following officers were appointed: Edward J. Pond, Nelson Ford and Orestes Hickox, supervisors; J. S. Kinney, secretary; Charles L. Ford, treasurer. It was agreed to purchase a plot of land bordering the property of D. B. Brinsmade, the plot of land being purchased from Mr. Brinsmade. The work was taken in hand and forty-four horse sheds were built upon the land. The sheds were numbered and, on Nov. 29th, were sold to different bidders. Whereupon the building committee was instructed to place the number and the name of the owner of each shed in a conspicuous place over each stall. These sheds were to have a long usefulness and were a testimonial to the reign of the horse and buggy. It was a reign symbolized by the familiar figure of the local doctor, beloved by the people, driv-

ing up and down the hills of Washington. In her delightful account of Dr. Remus M. Fowler, Edith H. Rossiter says: "He drove an ancient brown horse, given to wheezing, and great was the sympathy between master and horse, for 'Johnny Dargus' knew the roads as well as the doctor who could indulge in a little sleep on the way, knowing that the faithful Johnny would bring him safely home." Alas, the horse no longer reigns supreme but has been replaced by the ubiquitous automobile! And the horse sheds, keeping their lonely vigil, have yielded to the spirit of the times, making way for parking space.

In September, 1862, Henry Ward Beecher published an article in "The Independent" of New York City, in which he described a Sabbath spent in the town of Washington, Connecticut. The article gives such a vivid picture of the village life that we are taking the liberty of making a rather extended quotation from it.

"Here am I upon the round hilltop of Washington, Connecticut. It is a genuine old-fashioned New England town. The people in the region round about are agriculturalists and no railroads have introduced new-fangled notions. It is true that some old men mourn that Washington is not what it used to be; that children are not brought up as strictly; that there is more extravagance of table and dress; that Saturday night is not kept, and especially that Sunday is not so rigorously kept as formerly.

"The old church stands in the midst of the 'Green.' There are but about twenty-five dwelling houses on or near the Green. These are for the most part venerable. The windows contain glass six by eight inches in size, the ceilings are low, the frame timbers show through the plaster and huge stacks of stone chimneys use up much space in the center. The

stairs are crooked, hard to ascend, but too easy of getting down if you don't take care. These old two-story dwellings have an imposing look from without, especially with the grand old elms half covering them with their pendulous branches.

"On Sunday morning we waked and wondered where we were. No voice was heard, no footfall out of doors. The stillness of a New England Sabbath rested on this lovely hill. The first bell began to ring. It says to all mothers, 'Get the children ready' and to all housekeepers, 'Set your affairs in order, the sermon is coming.'

"In one hour comes the second bell. The village bell is mute all the week and wakes up to great officiousness on Sundays. And yet neither the first nor second bell is rung with a worldly swing. It opens with one or two low strokes, as if sounding the pitch; it goes steadily on for ten or twelve notes and then it pauses as if it had sung out a note and was taking breath. Bells roll down the valleys and over the hills their message 'Come worship.' How sweet it sounds no man knows who was not brought up in New England.

"The people are gathering. Up comes a one horse wagon; another waits behind it; two more are coming around the corner. They empty their load and drive off. Others take their places. Now a two horse team, an open wagon; now a covered plain carriage, a buggy, any kind of vehicle—but none on horseback. Mounting-blocks are done away with. The door is thronged. Little children in red jackets climb up the steps.

"It is a modern old church. The great triple window is over the pulpit. The galleries are exalted on high and are sustained by great square columns. We look in vain for the old-fashioned square pews. They have been supplanted. The

pastor, Rev. Mr. Lyman is absent, and the deacons are to *read* a sermon. Two clergymen from the city are present and one of them consents to read a sermon of Dr. Bushnell's.

"An hour's intermission, during which children are gathered in classes; old men and young formed groups outside, under the trees. The slender noon meal was eaten by those who lived out of town; while the villagers proper retired to their homes to partake of gingerbread and cheese, with an apple pie following. The hour having ended, again the bell took up its part, and called the houseful again to a 'Conference Meeting,' in which, instead of formal preaching, the devotional services were intermixed with several addresses. (Note. These addresses were by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and Prof. Robert R. Raymond of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.)

"When these services were ended, it was half-past three in the afternoon. There had been a sermon, a Sabbath School and a conference meeting and all ended by half-past three; yet the farmers thought it late. One would think so by the alacrity with which the wagons rushed up, caught their loads, and rolled off. In ten minutes the church was shut, not a man walked the Green and the town was still again.

"At four dinner. At half-past five singing in the church. The singers of the neighborhood quietly gathered. Whoever wished came in and went out when they chose. Anthems and tunes, and religious set-pieces were sung. The sun went down upon the happy company. It was Sabbath evening, calm, soft, clear, as if there had never been a sin or a sigh among these lovely hills. We wandered down to Mr. Gunn's school when messengers came. A wedding!

"A young soldier just going to the wars meant to give his girl the right to come to him should he be sick or wounded.

Tomorrow he leaves. Tonight they must be married. To Mr. Frank Brinsmade's we posted. Just then, in coarse soldier's blue, came the man and his flower by his side. By one of those generous sympathies that seize good people, out ran a noble woman (Mrs. Frederick W. Gunn) to invite them to stop and be married *there*, as several families were gathered there for an evening's singing. Not one had ever seen the parties. It was enough that the man was going to fight for the old flag. The rooms were thronged. The service proceeded and closed. Then some one, unbidden, began to sing, 'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah.' Then 'America' and the 'Star Spangled Banner' were added. Flowers were brought in for the young wife. The dear venerable mother (Mrs. D. B. Brinsmade) of that neighborhood sat by the pretty child-wife, giving her cheer and comfort. Thus two strangers came riding into town seeking a solitary wedding. They were stopped, borne into a refined home, surrounded with scores of loving hearts, giving them a wedding of joy and gladness." (Note. The young soldier was Horace Q. Judd of Bethel and the bride was Ellen E. Crofut of New Preston.)

Like other New England communities, Washington was deeply stirred by the issues arising from the Civil War. At a special memorial service, held in the church fifty years after the outbreak of the Civil War, Mr. Samuel J. Nettleton described the part played by Washington in that conflict, from which address we have taken the following extracts.

After the firing on Fort Sumter, an organization was formed to drill in the manual of arms and marching, meeting in the Ladies' Seminary, the old Methodist Church, afterward turned into a dwelling house known as Wesley Place. The drill master was Simeon H. Mitchell, a former state

militia officer. At President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 volunteers for three months, three young men responded. Their names were Logan, Goodyear and Rowe, and all were at school at the Gunnery. Soon after came the calls for 40,000 three year men and for 50,000 for the duration of the war. The Governor of the state called for volunteers. To these calls eight young men responded, namely, Dwight and Fitz-Greene Hollister, Simeon H. Calhoun, Lucius W. Fox, William Black, Harvey Perkins, Samuel Nettleton and Weston Cogswell, brother of Mrs. Sherman Woodruff. A few individual enlistments continued through the following winter, mostly from New Preston.

After the failure of McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, there came two calls; one for 300,000 for three years, and later, 300,000 for nine months. In answer to the first call, forty-eight men volunteered, among them being the following: Edgar W. and Henry Calhoun, Sheldon Clark, Jerome Titus, R. C. Loverage, and Gustavus Black. From New Preston there came Seth N. Taylor, Whittlesey, three Cogswells, Bolles, Cable, Barnes and others. In response to the second call there went fifteen men, some older and some who were boys in their teens. The number included Mr. J. B. Whitehead and James Black of the older ones. Among the younger men were Lewis Hollister, Elmer Kinney, Remus Ford and Joseph Wellman. For the Twenty-Ninth Regiment (colored) Washington furnished three men.

In 1863 there came the draft. The town had voted to furnish substitutes for those drafted if they did not wish to go. Among the first names drawn were the names of Abner W. Mitchell and Cornelius B. Gold and both decided to go rather than send substitutes. They became members of the Sixth Regiment. According to the record of Orestes Hickox,

Selectman of the town during those years, the town furnished eighty-three substitutes at a cost of over $22,000. Altogether Washington furnished two hundred men for the Union Army, of whom 117 were volunteers.

Mr. Samuel J. Nettleton refers briefly to a number of the men who fought for the Union. He speaks of Sheldon Clark, the brother of Mrs. Henry Hickox, as being a promising young man. Lewis Hollister was a lover of music and was the band-master of his regiment. Dwight and Lewis Hollister were grandsons of Deacon Sherman P. Hollister, while Fitz-Greene Hollister was a grandson of Deacon Preston S. Hollister, the grandfathers being the famous twins who looked so much alike. Fitz-Greene was a great lover of books. Of Mr. Abner Mitchell, Mr. Nettleton speaks as follows: "He was not only head and shoulders above us physically but he towered above us in character. He was over forty years of age, matured in mind, always present at the regular and cottage prayer meetings of the church, ready for every good word and deed, a whole-souled Christian man to seek for counsel or advice. He was a great loss to the church and town."

After laboring as minister of the church for eleven years, Mr. Lyman felt it necessary to resign as pastor for reasons of ill-health. His resignation was dated April 30th, 1863, the meeting of the Consociation for the dismissal being held on June 2nd. Mr. Lyman had labored effectively and was greatly loved. In replying to his letter of resignation, the church spoke of it with sincere regret as follows: "While we unite with our pastor in requesting the Consociation, it is with great reluctance and heartfelt sorrow that we are thus to be deprived of the services of one whose ministrations have been pre-eminently faithful, fearless, kind and true."

The records of the Consociation contain this high tribute

of praise: "The Rev. Ephraim Lyman who, with a brief interval, has been a member of this ecclesiastical body for twenty-eight years, is a man who needs no letter of commendation from us wherever he is known. We recognize in him an able minister of the New Testament, rightly dividing the word of God, applying the principles of divine truth to all human relations, social, civil and sacred, and thus complying with the Master's command to his apostles. In this time of national distress, when the souls of Christ's ministers are tried, the trumpet of this watchman has given forth no uncertain sound. His utterances have been clear, distinct, bold and faithful, showing the people their sins, and exhorting them to repentance. In a special manner is Brother Lyman to be commended for his earnest, fearless and unwavering patriotism in such a time as this."

Following the departure of Mr. Lyman, the church and society engaged the services of Rev. William H. H. Murray on a temporary basis. For example, in the society's record there appears this entry under the year 1864: "The members of the First Ecclesiastical Society of Washington are hereby warned to meet at the church on Saturday the 19th day of March at one o'clock P. M. to consider the propriety of retaining the services of the Rev. Mr. Murray and to take what action in regard to the same as may be deemed advisable."

Apparently all was not smooth sailing for Mr. Murray. He came and served and made friends. But there also must have been criticism. For we find the following resolution in the church record, under the date of July 28, 1864:

"Whereas efforts seem to have been made to prejudice the minds of men in this and neighboring communities

against the work and character of the Rev. Wm. H. H. Murray as a preacher of the gospel, and

"Whereas we have in our hands strong testimonials in regard to his qualifications for the work of the ministry before us as well as in his labors for the last six months by which to judge in the case,

"We as a church deem it due to ourselves as well as him to express ourselves publicly in the matter, therefore—

"Resolved that we as a church do cordially testify to the faithfulness with which Mr. Murray has held up before this people the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion; the earnestness with which he has urged Christians to renewed efforts for personal holiness and to greater exertions for the promotion of Christ's Kingdom. And the fidelity with which he has warned sinners of their danger and pointed them to the only way of salvation.

"And that we have reason to rejoice and praise the great Head of the Church that he has as we trust blessed his labors among us to the quickening of some in the church to more zeal and activity and the conversion of some from the ways of sin and death to the way of life and peace. And further, while Mr. Murray shall remain among us and perform the duties of his office faithfully as we believe him to have done in the past, we promise him our support, our prayers and our cordial cooperation."

While the above resolution sounds emphatic it did not clear the atmosphere. Under date of September 3rd, a meeting of the society debated the issue and a resolution of F. W. Gunn to procure the services of Mr. Murray for a longer period was lost by one vote. Similarly at a church meeting on September 15th, 1864, an opportunity was given a protesting minority to state their objections to the resolution

adopted on July 28th. After discussing the protest, the vote was taken, the protest being lost by a vote of 30 to 9. The record is not clear as to what the difficulty was. Rumor has it that Mr. Murray was a man of liberal tendencies who started various innovations.

It was not long before he received a summons to work elsewhere and on November 12th, the society agreed to release him from the fulfillment of his contract, passing the following resolution: "That we desire to convey to Rev. Wm. H. H. Murray the expression of our high admiration, gratitude and affection. Called to fields of wider influence, we commend him to the Christian sympathy, love and confidence of those among whom his lot may fall."

On November 20th, Mr. Murray preached his final sermon before leaving to become pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Greenwich, Connecticut. The text was from Second Corinthians: 13: 5—"Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." It was a parting shot and that is expressing it rather mildly. Mr. Murray clearly was one who spoke his mind without equivocation. The sermon was printed and a copy of it is now in the possession of the Gunn Memorial Library.

The church remained without a settled pastor until the annual meeting of May 31st, 1866, when it was voted to request the society to unite in sending a call to Rev. W. S. Colton to become the pastor of the church. To this call Mr. Colton responded favorably and began his duties after being duly installed. The story goes that Mr. Colton came with his family by stagecoach from New Milford. Arriving on Church Hill they were met by such a heavy thunder storm that they had to spend the night in a barn, going on the

next morning to their destination. Rumor also has it that Miss Amy Kenyon was a passenger in the stagecoach.

In connection with the installation of Mr. Colton, a letter touching upon it was written by Mrs. Emmeline Steele Vail to her husband, Charles B. Vail, who later became the editor of the "Litchfield Enquirer." We quote the following excerpts from the letter which was written August 22, 1866.

"Mary and I started at 2 P. M. yesterday and drove down here. Father came down to Washington in the morning with the delegates. I did not expect to stop at Frank's as I thought they would be more than full with Aunt Mary, William Brinsmade and Johnny, Miss Brainard and Mary V. but they insisted upon it and I am very glad to be here. Yesterday the Consociation examined Mr. Colton. We were too late to hear that, which I regret, as from what I hear it must have been spicy. Father had a good many questions to ask upon the catechism, etc. But Mr. Colton was very ready with his answers and came off with flying colors.

"Today has been the Installation and everything has gone off in the most gratifying manner. Washington is the greatest place I ever heard of for getting up a good time and has the knack of getting the most lions together on the shortest notice.

"Our Mr. Beecher (Henry Ward) happened along just in the nick of time. His 'hay cold' or catarrh usually comes on by the 17th of August. This season it has held off for a few days; he had business up this way somewhere, and ran in to surprise Bertie (Mr. Beecher's son at the Gunnery School). Of course he was a great acquisition and gave a most glorious charge to the new minister. It was very Beecherish and a word in season to pastor and people.

"Rev. George Richards of Bridgeport is here and

preached the sermon. Rev. Mr. Murry from New York, Rev. Johnson Tomlinson of Chester, N. H., Rev. Mr. Andrews of Hartford, Prof. Seymore of Western Reserve College, Ohio, etc. Also here are General and Mrs. Brown from Richmond, Va., and several from Philadelphia. Among the musical celebrities are Miss Brainard of New York, William Brinsmade of Springfield, Mass., Romeyn Smith of Brooklyn and Mary Vail of Litchfield. Of course the musical part of the performance was a decided success.

"After the services in the church all were invited to go down to Mr. Gunn's grove and partake of a collation prepared for the people. There was a pig and a sheep roasted whole, with chickens, beef, biscuits, pies, puddings, cakes without stint. There was feasting and speech making and a good time generally. I had the pleasure of shaking hands with or kissing most of the old men and women in town and had invitations to visit enough to keep me here a month. To finish out the day in characteristic Washington style we had a dance at Mr. Gunn's in the evening and a bonfire in the grove."

(Note. The above letter is in the possession of Mr. Lewis G. Colton, a son of Rev. W. S. Colton.)

Little has been said in this historical record of the various constitutional changes that were made from time to time in the church organization. These changes came as a matter of course. For example, in December of 1864, changes were made in the rules governing the church, bringing them up-to-date. One such rule was that the Standing Committee was to consist of the pastor, the deacons, and four brethren hereafter to be elected to hold the office for four years, and a treasurer to be chosen from among the deacons of the church. This is substantially the arrangement at present

except that the four brethren have become "sisters." Our failure to describe these changes made in organizational details from time to time rests on the assumption that they are of little interest to present-day readers.

One change that is of definite interest, however, had to do with the omission of one of the Sabbath services during the Civil War years. At the annual meeting of the society, on November 3rd, 1863, it was voted to "have but one service a Sabbath, commencing at 11 A. M., from the first Sabbath in December to the first Sabbath in March inclusive." The change to the one service a Sunday may have had something to do with the vagaries of the New England weather and the difficulties of travel. At a special meeting of the society in 1865, it was voted to "have one service a Sabbath to the first of April and two services a Sabbath to the first of November."

The need of the church for an organ was supplied during these years, as is evidenced by the reference in the society record of May 14th, 1866: "The report of the organ committee was accepted. Voted that the sum of $146 be appropriated from the treasury of this society for the purpose of defraying the expense of preparing the church for the organ, it being understood that the society be released from any obligation to pay for the use of the melodeon owned by the choir. That the thanks of this society be tendered to the organ committee for their services in procuring and placing in the church an organ."

The church records give little hint of the efforts that must have been made by the members of the church in order to raise funds for this organ. Mrs. Powell Seeley recalls that her father and mother spent days in driving around the countryside visiting among the neighbors and asking them

to contribute. Her parents commented upon the fact that the church members responded generously to the appeal, thus living up to the Washington tradition.

This new organ must have been an unusually fine instrument for a country church in 1865. It cost $2,150. It was built by Hook and Hastings of Boston, Massachusetts, a copy of the contract being still in the possession of the church. It gives all the specifications and details covering the construction of the organ.

In the year 1888 substantial improvements costing $1,420 were made in the organ by the same company which had constructed it. In this work of improving and repairing the organ, Mr. Augustus Smith took a keen personal interest and made a generous contribution. He also made specific recommendations as to what improvements should be made.

From time to time there were additions to the church property and equipment. At a society meeting, April 27th, 1864, with Bennett G. Fenn as moderator, it was voted "to offer the Rev. Ephraim Lyman the sum of $400 for the land belonging to him adjoining the parsonage." Under date of June 2nd, 1872, there is a resolution in the church record, authorizing the treasurer to purchase two more goblets for sacramental service. It is explained by the following note: "The communion set now in use on which is inscribed 'in memory of Daniel Taylor Mitchell 1869' was presented by his son, Simeon H. Mitchell, to the Congregational Church, Washington, Connecticut."

The liberal tradition that has been characteristic of this church is well illustrated by an arrangement reached at a society meeting on November 18th, 1872, by which the church building was made available for public lectures. Our present custom of having forum meetings in the summer months thus

has a long history behind it. We quote the resolution: "Resolved that the Washington Lecture Association be allowed the use of the church for the accommodation of the lectures to be delivered under the auspices of the Association during the coming winter; the Association to pay all expenses which may be incurred in the occupation of the church for said purpose; and further that there be no boisterous demonstration or applause in the church during the course of these lectures."

A great event for Washington was the completion of the Shepaug Railroad in that same year, namely 1872. It was three years later, in 1875, that the Grange was established. The first master, Charles H. Mason, the secretary, F. N. Galpin, and the treasurer, William T. Odell, were members of the Congregational church.

THE HALL ON THE GREEN

CHAPTER TWELVE

Years of Continuing Growth

It was but natural that with the passing of the years, the thinking of Christian people changed in regard to matters of theology. The Calvinistic views of the nineteenth century were no longer widely held. Therefore it became necessary from time to time to go over the creeds of the church in order to bring them up to date and make them an accurate reflection of the views of the church members. At a church meeting in 1876, there was a report by a committee which had been appointed to revise the church creed, of which Deacon S. S. Baldwin was chairman and the creed as amended was adopted. It reads as follows:

"Confession of Faith of the First Church of Christ in Washington.

"Article 1. Do you believe the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, to be the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice?

"Article 2. Do you believe that there are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory?

"Article 3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God hath given himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world and that he is the only one through which sinners may come to God and find acceptance with him?

"Article 4. Do you believe that repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are the conditions upon which God pardons and justifies the believing sinner; that though we are justified by faith alone, personal holiness is required of every believer, and that a holy life and conversation is the best evidence of our being in a justified state?

"Article 5. Do you believe that the hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth; that every one shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body; that the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment and the righteous into life eternal?"

From the early years the Christian education of youth had been the concern of this church. During the pastorate of Mr. Porter it was greatly stressed. When the Sunday School movement took root in the Protestant churches of America, our church in Washington was not slow to take part in the movement. The following resolution, passed at the annual meeting of January 6th, 1876, indicates how important the work of education was viewed by our church members: "Resolved that while we fully appreciate the work which the Sabbath School Society has accomplished in the past and the degree of prosperity which the Sabbath School has enjoyed under its direction, we believe that the present and future interests of the school will be best subserved by its adoption on the part of the church, and it is resolved that the church take the Sabbath School into its own charge and

under its own watch and care and that the officers of the school be elected at this and each succeeding annual meeting of the church, the term of office being one year."

At the annual meeting of the church held a year later on January 4th, 1877, a set of rules was drawn up and adopted for the management of the Sabbath School. They were as follows:

"The officers of the Sabbath School shall consist of a superintendent, an assistant superintendent, a treasurer, a librarian, an assistant librarian, and a library committee to consist of three persons.

"The superintendent and librarian shall be appointed by ballot, the remaining officers by nomination; the assistant superintendent to be nominated by the superintendent.

"It shall be the duty of the superintendent, in conjunction with his assistant, to preside over the sessions of the school, to give direction in its general management and organization of classes, and assignment of teachers for the same, and to exercise a general watch and care over all the interests of the school. The superintendent shall be required to present a written report at each annual church meeting, giving a general outline of the experiences of the school for the preceding year, and giving a statement of its general condition at the time the said report is presented.

"It shall be the duty of the treasurer to take charge of all funds contributed by or for the benefit of said school and to disburse the same for such purposes as the school shall direct by a majority of its members, at a regular meeting or session of the school. The treasurer shall be required to make a written report at each annual church meeting.

"It shall be the duty of the librarian together with his assistant to take charge of all books belonging to the school

and to distribute the same at such times and in such ways as the school shall by majority vote direct. The librarian shall be required to make a report of the number of books and their condition and any other matter of interest connected with the library, at each annual meeting of the church.

"The library committee of three persons together with the librarian and the assistant librarian shall select and purchase all books purchased for the library and no books shall be admitted as a part of the library without the consent and approval of a majority of the committee as so constituted.

"The teachers assigned to the several classes composing the school shall retain their positions for one year, or until the annual reorganization of the school which shall take place on the first Sabbath of February of each year. All the officers of the school as above mentioned shall be elected for one year and shall commence their term of office on the first Sabbath of February of each year."

After a loyal and effective pastorate of ten years, Rev. W. S. Colton tendered his resignation as minister of the church, the resignation to take effect on August 22nd, 1876. At regularly called meetings of the church and of the society, suitable resolutions were drawn up in appreciation of the services of Mr. Colton. The resolution of the church members reads as follows:

"That we the members of this church do most fully and heartily express our entire confidence in the Christian character of Rev. W. S. Colton; in his soundness in the faith, and in all essential Christian doctrine; in his willingness to spend and be spent in his service of Christ; and we do hereby testify to his faithfulness in the presentation of Gospel truth, and in seeking to win souls to Christ, and we do

heartily commend his faithfulness in pastoral visitation and the spirit of Christian love and sympathy which has characterized all his intercourse with this church and people. And it is the sincere desire and earnest prayer of all our hearts that in whatever field of ministerial labor his lot may be cast in the future, he may be permitted to reap abundant harvests as the fruit of his labors and the seal of his ministry and that the choicest of Heaven's blessings may ever abide with him and his."

To succeed Mr. Colton, the church sent an invitation to a young man named George S. Thrall that he come and minister to the church on a year's basis. This invitation was accepted by Mr. Thrall on May 9th, 1877. As a result, a Council was called to meet in the church at Washington on July 18th to examine and ordain Mr. Thrall to the work of the Christian ministry.

The saying is that a new broom sweeps clean. Reading the minutes of the annual meeting of January 3rd, 1878, it seems clear that Mr. Thrall brought great enthusiasm to his task as pastor of the church. One resolution was concerned with the finances of the church and was as follows:

"Believing that it is the duty of every person that is a member of this church to pay his or her share for the support of the institution of religion, that the covenant vows demand it, that the success of the Master's cause demands it, therefore,

"Resolved that it is the sense of this church that every person who is a church member and not a member of the Ecclesiastical Society, who refuses to pay his share for the support of the Gospel because of not being a member of said Society, that such persons are open to discipline for a breach of the covenant and for the sin of covetousness."

Another resolution, looking for more effective pastoral work, was as follows: "It shall be the duty of the Standing Committee of the Church and others appointed by them to divide the society into districts, each one taking a district, so that each family and person shall be visited at least twice a year by one or more of the committee. They shall first try to get all who do not attend any church to do so, and provide ways and means for them to get there. Second, they shall urge all who think they are Christians to unite with the church. Third, they shall urge all to join the society and help support the services of the church. Fourth, they shall meet, welcome, and seat all who have no seats and yet desire to worship with us. Fifth, they shall endeavor to visit the poor who are members and comfort them in their afflictions and relieve their distress, as much as lies in their power. Sixth, they shall urge all members to pay in proportion to their means for the support of the Gospel in this place."

The big event at the beginning of each year was the sale of slips or pew rentals in order to secure the necessary funds for the minister's salary and other local expenses. For benevolence work and the support of home and foreign missions it was the usual practice to make two or three special solicitations each year. But for local expenses, the pew rentals were the main source of income. The following resolution of the society meeting in January, 1880, may serve as a sample of the working of the system:

"Resolved that the slips be sold on Saturday, January 3rd, on an assessment yet to be made and that each person bidding a slip who does not pay for the same at the time of sale, be required to give his note for the amount, the said note to be made payable on the first day of February, 1880, and to go on interest from that date, and that all slips re-

maining unsold on the day of sale shall be left for sale in the hands of the Society's Committee, and the time of occupancy of said slips shall expire on December 1st, 1880."

A further resolution, passed at an adjourned meeting in 1880 was as follows: "Resolved that any person or his family who takes possession of a slip which he or they have not bought, occupying the same for the use of his family shall be held responsible for and required to pay the full amount of the assessment of the same, and that any person or persons occupying said seats three Sabbaths, the Society's Committee shall notify them of the conditions of sale embraced in this resolution."

The pews in greatest demand were in the central section of the church and therefore they were higher priced than those on the side or at the rear of the church. The price of the pews was set by a committee appointed for that purpose. But it was permissible at the annual auction to bid higher than the set price for certain pews and this was sometimes done. It would occasionally lead to tension between those who did the bidding. The usual custom, however, was for a family to occupy the same pew year after year. The prices set for the pews would vary with the financial needs of the church. It is said that the price of a typical pew was about $40 a year. Quite often two families occupied the same pew, sharing equally in the cost of the pew.

At the conclusion of his year's engagement, Mr. Thrall was invited to remain indefinitely as the pastor of the church. The following resolution of appreciation was passed at a society meeting: "Whereas the Rev. G. S. Thrall has won our universal admiration, love and Christian confidence, therefore, be it resolved that we invite Mr. Thrall to remain with us in the work of the Gospel ministry, either party to

terminate the engagement by giving the other three months notice." In a letter to the society Mr. Thrall signified his acceptance of the offer and agreed to remain as the pastor of the church.

During Mr. Thrall's pastorate it was the consensus of opinion that the church building was in need of extensive repairs. In 1845 the roof of the church had been reshingled and the old steeple with its open bell-deck had been taken down. In its place the present spire was erected. In 1846 the square-box pews in the church had been removed, together with the high pulpit and its winding stairways. Except for painting and reshingling where needed, little else had been attempted for a period of over thirty years.

Therefore the call went out on June 5th, 1879 for the members of the society to meet and consider the question of repairs to the church building. It was decided to proceed with the repairs, the funds to be secured by subscription. Charles L. Hickox, Henry W. Seeley and Earle Buckingham were named as a committee to undertake and supervise the work. The amount secured was to be the deciding factor in determining what should be done. Adequate time was given for the securing of subscriptions. The total amount secured was something over $3,000.

The work of remodeling the church was completed at the end of 1879 and on January 21st, 1880, there was held a service of rededication. At a meeting in the morning, Rev. Elijah W. Woodruff gave an historical address. At the dedicatory service in the afternoon, the sermon was preached by Rev. Edward Hawes and the prayer given by Rev. W. S. Colton. The dedicatory hymn for the occasion was written by Rev. E. W. Woodruff. It was as follows:

"As on Judea's hill of old,
Zion's fair temple stood:
So on Judea's hill today,
Our humble church of God.

"Our fathers' zeal the walls did raise
With earnest, rev'rent care.
Their children now its courts restore,
And dedicate with prayer.

"The Lord, no temple made with hands,
Or place doth he require.
His throne is in each humble heart,
He's worshiped everywhere.

"Yet here would we reconsecrate,
With prayer and songs of praise,
To God, this house, our lives, our all,
And grateful hearts upraise."

A special meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society was held on October 11th, 1881, to take action upon the resignation of Mr. Thrall from the pastorate of the church. This resignation was accepted with keen regret. The members of the society and church expressed their deep appreciation for the many services rendered by Mr. Thrall during his four years in the pastorate.

Boys will be boys and the village Green has doubtless been a temptation to the boys of Washington for two hundred years. There is a picture of a baseball game played on the Green in the book, "The Master of the Gunnery." Rumor has it that the picture was taken about 1870. Apparently the time came when baseball on the Green was too much of a good thing. At any rate, in 1881, the following resolution

was passed and is found in the records of the society: "Resolved that it is the sense of this Society that the use of the Society's grounds for any games of ball is destructive to the present order of the grounds and both an inconvenience and danger to the traveling public, therefore, voted that the Society's Committee are hereby instructed to take such action as shall discontinue the same."

On the 4th of December, 1881, the society through its committee, invited Rev. William Crawford to act as pastor of the church until November, 1882. This invitation was accepted by Mr. Crawford in a letter written at Roxbury, Massachusetts, on December 21st. Mr. Crawford expressed his desire to begin his work on January 1st, 1882. A perusal of the church records of that year indicates that it was a busy and happy year of fellowship between pastor and people. This impression is confirmed by the following item, dated Easter Sunday, March 25th, 1883:

"Dr. William Crawford supplied the pulpit for fifteen months as an efficient preacher of the gospel, a faithful minister in all Christian work and duty, a genial Christian man, a faithful, thorough scholar. He closed his services today and goes to take charge of a church in Sparta, Wisconsin."

For several months the pulpit was supplied by visiting ministers and then, on November 27th, 1883, a special meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society was called for the purpose of taking action upon the proposal to invite Rev. Herbert B. Turner to become the pastor of the church. It was decided to send the call and two days later, at a special meeting of the church, a similar action was taken. Writing on January 1st, 1884, Mr. Turner accepted the call to Washington and expressed his willingness to begin work

immediately. A committee, composed of Charles L. Hickox, John N. Woodruff and Sheldon J. Logan, was appointed by the society to arrange about Mr. Turner's installation.

At a special meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society on March 4th, 1885, it was voted "to accept the proposition of Mr. E. H. Van Ingen to repair and improve the front of the church according to the plan proposed at the meeting." No other details are given.

The church meeting of January 3rd, 1889, was eventful because it marked the beginning of negotiations with the group of people who had organized a Swedish church in Washington the year before on December 6th, 1888. This group had expressed a desire to become a branch of the Congregational church. Therefore committees were appointed to confer with the committee from the Swedish church and draw up plans for union between the churches.

At a church meeting on April 11th, there was presented an application from the Swedish church to become a branch of this church. It was unanimously voted that the application be granted. The letter from the Swedish church was as follows: "Dear Brethren— We the undersigned constituting the Swedish Ecclesiastical Society of Washington, Connecticut, respectfully bring to you the following application, that the Swedish members of the Congregational Church and all who may hereafter become members, may be allowed to form and maintain an organization under the rules and regulations of the Congregational Church, to be called the Swedish Branch of the Congregational Church of Washington, Connecticut, our object being to provide religious instruction in the Swedish tongue for our people and to advance the Kingdom of Christ among us."

In reply to the above communication, the following action

was taken: "Whereas application has been received by this church from a large number of Christian brethren and sisters who have united in forming an organization, some of whom are now members of this church, for permission to form an organization subordinate to this church in all its conduct and work, to be called the Swedish Branch of the Congregational Church of Washington, therefore it is resolved that the said application be granted."

Thus came into being the Swedish Branch of the Congregational Church in Washington. A new building was erected and dedicated the Sunday before Christmas in the same year of 1889. From that day to this the church has filled an important place in the town of Washington. The close relationship to the Congregational Church lasted until Nov. 18th, 1892. Thereafter it ceased to be a branch and became an independent church in its own right, with a set of by-laws of its own choosing, and taking the name, the Evangelical Salem Church.

It was on Sept. 21st, 1890, that the new church building of the Roman Catholic Community in Washington was dedicated and given the name, the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Preceding the construction of the church, masses had been said for a number of years in various homes in Washington.

The Trinity Lutheran Church of Washington was organized on May 16th, 1892, and the church building was completed soon after.

In the year 1891 it became evident that substantial repairs were necessary in connection with the roof of the Congregational church. A special meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society was called on April 6th and the Society's Committee was instructed to proceed with the work of putting a new

roof on the church building. It was decided that it should be a steel roof and the work was completed in due course.

In that same year, on October 4th, the members of the church received the distressing news of the resignation of their pastor, Mr. Turner, because of ill health. In his letter of resignation, Mr. Turner spoke of the "harmony and unity that has prevailed amongst us. This has been due not to any special qualifications of heart in your pastor but rather to the sincere desire on the part of all to be of the same mind and to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. For most of this time I have enjoyed good health. But for the past eight months I have been far from well. I do not seem to regain the strength and vigor I have lost. I am now admonished to seek a prolonged rest. Therefore, real as is the pain in parting from a people to whom I have become so deeply attached, I am reluctantly compelled to tender my resignation."

Because of their affection for Mr. Turner, the members of the church were most reluctant to accept his resignation. Instead they passed the following resolution on October 19th: "Resolved that in extending to Mr. Turner our sympathy in his illness and our hope for his speedy restoration to health, we express our hearty appreciation of the valuable services which he has rendered. That as only a continuance of his disability to the extent of interfering with the performance of his pastoral duties could reconcile us to a severance of his relations with the society, we urgently request Mr. Turner to accept our offer of a six months' vacation without salary, and the use of the parsonage for that period."

Mr. Turner agreed to the above proposal. But in 1892 there came an invitation to Mr. Turner to become the chap-

lain of the Hampton Institute in Virginia. Therefore on June 15th, Mr. Turner again offered his resignation and asked that it might take effect on August 1st. The resignation was accepted and the following resolution was passed by the Ecclesiastical Society: "Resolved that we hereby express our deep sense of obligation to our pastor for his conscientious zeal and faithful service on our behalf and our appreciation of the fact that the society during his ministrations, covering a period of eight years, has steadily prospered."

In the fall of 1891, an event took place that was of general interest throughout Litchfield County. It was the Centennial Anniversary of the Litchfield South Association, held in Litchfield on October 1st, 1891. A brief reference to the history of the Consociation may not be amiss. The platform of church order, adopted at Saybrook in 1780, was the basis of the ecclesiastical organization of Congregational churches in Connecticut. This contemplated that there should be one Consociation in each County. When Litchfield County was incorporated in 1751, measures were taken to organize the churches of the County into a Consociation. This action was completed at Litchfield on July 7th, 1752, delegates from fifteen churches being present at the meeting. This was the arrangement in force until 1791.

In that year it seemed wise to divide the Consociation into two bodies because there were now twenty-eight churches in the Consociation and this involved difficulties of travel because of the distance and the uncertainties of the New England weather. The southern district included the churches in Bethlehem, Harwinton, Litchfield, New Milford, New Preston, Plymouth, Roxbury, Southbury, South Britain, South Farms, Washington, Watertown and Woodbury. Other

churches to be added later were Northfield in 1798, Milton in 1798, Bridgewater in 1809 and Plymouth Hollow in 1837.

The first meeting of the Litchfield South Consociation was held in the house of Dr. Elisha Sill in Goshen on September 7th, 1791. At the Centennial meeting in 1891, in addition to the sermon by Rev. J. L. R. Wyckoff, there were three papers dealing with the history of the Consociation. Rev. G. J. Harrison read an historical paper; Rev. E. B. Hillard spoke on the rural church; and Rev. E. P. Herrick gave a biographical paper.

The time was now drawing near when the members of the church in Washington were due for a celebration. This was to be nothing less than the celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the establishment of the church. With that in mind, at a special meeting of the church, on July 5th, 1892, a committee was appointed to take the work in hand.

The celebration was held on September 1st, 1892. The following committees were in charge of the anniversary. Arrangements: S. J. Nettleton, C. L. Hickox, J. C. Brinsmade, J. N. Woodruff, C. B. Nettleton. Finances: S. J. Logan, Charles Hollister, W. G. Brinsmade. Decoration: Mrs. E. H. Van Ingen, Mrs. W. H. Gibson, Mrs. J. C. Brinsmade, Mrs. E. K. Rossiter, Mrs. W. J. Ford, Miss M. W. Brown. Music: W. G. Brinsmade. Collation: Mrs. Arthur Hollister, Mrs. Jerome Kinney, Mrs. Charles Hollister, Miss Ellen Keaveny, C. B. Nettleton, A. C. Titus, Louis Mason, Wilbur Fenn.

The morning session at 10 A. M. was as follows:

Doxology
Invocation

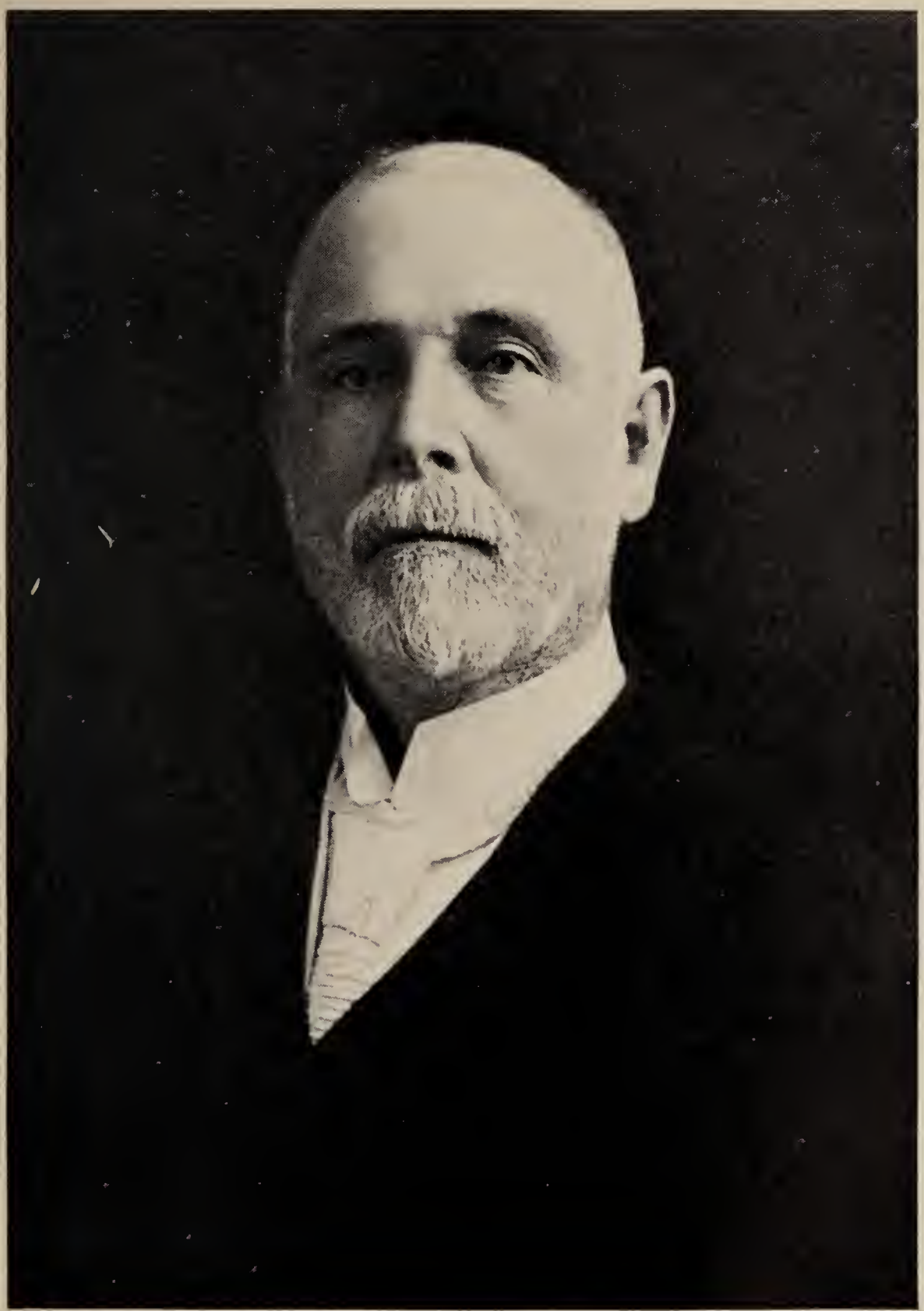
Hymn—"Oh, God, beneath whose Guiding Hand"
Scripture reading
Prayer, Rev. Austin Gardner
Three Historical Addresses. The Church of Stratford, Rev. Frank S. Child. The Church of Ancient Woodbury, Rev. J. A. Freeman. The Church of Judea, Rev. H. B. Turner
Hymn—"God is the Refuge of His Saints"
Reminiscences of Life in Washington, Rev. Henry Calhoun
Hymn—"Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds"
Some Revival Periods in the History of the Church, Deacon S. S. Baldwin
Hymn—"Lord, Dismiss us with Thy Blessing"

There was a dinner for the members of the church and their guests at 12:30 P. M. This was followed by the afternoon session at 2 P. M. The program was as follows:

Music
Formative Influences in New England Churches, Rev. W. S. Colton
Music
Biographical Sketch of the Pastors of the Early Church in Judea, Rev. J. L. R. Wyckoff
Hymn—"Auld Lang Syne"
Benediction

The above addresses were published in a pamphlet to commemorate the anniversary. There was a musical service in the evening.

As was the case before the call to Mr. Turner, so now again there was a period of about two years during which there was no settled pastor of the church. On July 5th, 1892, the record speaks of Rev. J. D. Ritchey being invited to serve the church as acting pastor for one year and to have



ROBERT E. CARTER

MINISTER

1894–1925

TERTIUS VAN DYKE

MINISTER

1926–1935

the use of the parsonage. On Nov. 11th, 1893, a call was sent to Rev. George F. Prentiss of Bridgeport, inviting him to become the pastor of the church. In reply to the invitation, Mr. Prentiss expressed his deep regret that he was not able to accept the call. On Feb. 1st, 1894, a call was sent to Rev. J. B. Thrall of Derby, Connecticut. In a long and appreciative letter, Mr. Thrall sent his sincere regrets at being unable to accept the invitation of the church to become its minister.

Then on March 8th, the members of the Ecclesiastical Society were asked to meet and take action on the question of inviting Rev. Robert E. Carter to become the pastor of the church. The meeting was held and the call was sent. On March 14th, Mr. Carter sent a letter of acceptance to the church from Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He wrote: "Gratification at the confidence which the congregation has shown in my ability to serve them is tempered only by my own sense of limitations. I accept the call which you give me, trusting that in this ministry, you will be my helpers, holding up my hands with all prayer and supplication."

The Council to install Rev. Robert E. Carter was held in the church at Washington on June 27th, 1894. The examination of the candidate took place in the morning and the installation in the afternoon. Mr. Turner came from Hampton and gave the charge to the people. Thus began an eventful pastorate of thirty-one years. The only pastor to exceed Mr. Carter's length of service was Rev. Daniel Brinsmade who was minister of the church for forty-four years.

At a church meeting on January 24th, 1895, there was the report of the committee which had been appointed to revise the rules of the church. In adopting the new rules it was agreed to set aside all previous rules which may be upon

the records. From this day forward the new rules would be in force and would govern all the business of the church. It was voted to have the revised rules printed in pamphlet form, together with the confession of faith and the revised membership list.

In December of 1894, the members of the Ecclesiastical Society expressed to Mr. C. B. Gold their appreciation of his gift of a parcel of land near the parsonage.

A year later, in November of 1895, the Society's Committee began to investigate the question of procuring a permanent water supply for the parsonage. It was voted that the Society's Committee should be empowered to proceed with the necessary arrangements such as the purchase of springs and the conveyance of the water in pipes to the parsonage. Exactly two years later a resolution was passed instructing the committee to secure running water for the parsonage if it could be done at an annual rental not to exceed fifteen dollars. Otherwise they were instructed to dig a well on the parsonage grounds. In the fall of 1898 pipes were laid and water was brought to the parsonage, supplied by the Judea Water Company.

Apparently the need for finding a satisfactory water supply for the parsonage was the impulse that led to the organization of the Judea Water Company. A group of citizens formed a company and sold stock on the subscription basis. The company was incorporated on September 24th, 1898 under the title of The Judea Water Company.

In that same year, an interesting petition was presented at a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Society. It reads as follows: "The old-time custom of paying respect to the burial service of our departed citizens by the tolling of the church bell has fallen into disuse. In a village like Washington where

all the inhabitants are interested in the passing away of any citizen, it is not only desirable but necessary that the villagers be notified, by the tolling of the bell, of such an event. That one may, if possible, join in the service at the cemetery and at least drop all work or refrain from anything that can be an interruption to the solemnity of the occasion. Wherefore we the undersigned desire that this custom be observed and petition the Ecclesiastical Society to instruct the sexton to include that office among his duties at every interment from our church and society, unless requested by friends to omit it."

The petition was signed by eighteen citizens of the community. The matter was left in the hands of the Society's Committee. At their discretion, they were at liberty to instruct the sexton to ring the church bell as requested in the petition.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Mr. Carter's Pastorate

DURING THE PASTORATE of Mr. Carter many changes took place affecting the program, organization and equipment of the church. In a sense such changes were a response to the developments taking place in the community. Like other towns in Western Connecticut, Washington had become the summer home of many families who spent their winters in New York. Not a few of these summer visitors have been brought into the church fellowship and have borne their share of the financial obligations of the church. The expansion of the church program during the last forty years may be seen by a comparison between the budget of 1897 and that of 1939. In 1897, the church treasurer reported expenditures of $1,669.44, with a balance of $63.85, thus totaling $1,733.29. For the year ending July 31st, 1940, the combined budget expenses and balance on hand totaled $8,042.33.

From time to time there were changes in the Standing Rules of the church. One such change created the position of honorary life deacon. Another change specified that the Lord's Supper should be observed on the first Sunday of

January, March, May, August and November. Still another alteration provided for the post of assistant treasurer, to be elected each year, in addition to the treasurer. The greatest change, however, was the incorporation of the church which was voted on February 16th, 1899, as follows: "We, the members of the First Congregational Church of Washington, Connecticut, of legal age, do hereby incorporate ourselves in accordance with the laws of the state."

Under this arrangement the trusteeship of the property of the church was to be in the hands of the Standing Committee of the church, acting as a Board of Trustees. But at any time the church could, if it so desired, elect a Board of Trustees separate from the Standing Committee. On February 22nd, 1899, a letter was received from the Secretary of State in Hartford acknowledging receipt of the Certificate of Organization and stating that it was placed on file.

A new form of admission to the church was adopted in 1899, as follows: "Dearly beloved, called by God to be His children through Jesus Christ we give hearty thanks to God who through His Spirit has opened your eyes to see and your hearts to receive Jesus as Lord and who has inclined you to present yourselves at this time to make confession to Him. We believe in God the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ His Son our Saviour, and in the Holy Spirit the Comforter by whom the Scriptures were given. We believe in the Church of God, the household of faith; in the Christian life of love to God and love to man; in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the dead and in the life eternal. Thus confessing with us and with all saints, your Christian faith before the Lord Jesus and in the presence of His people, you devote yourself to the love, obedience and service of Jesus Christ, to walk in all His ways as now known, or hereafter

to be made known to you, whatever it may cost you, according to your best endeavor, the Lord assisting you." Response. "I do."

The following form of admission was adopted for those desiring to unite with the church by letter: "Beloved in the Lord, you have all been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, have confessed the Faith of Christ before witnesses and have given yourself to God in an everlasting covenant of grace. You do now cordially unite yourself with this Church of Christ, to share with us in its worship and work, to walk with us in love and faithfulness as long as your relations with us shall continue." Response. "I do."

The following paragraph was adopted, to be read by the minister while the members of the church were standing: "We then, the members of this church, receive you into our communion and welcome you with joy to our fellowship. We promise to pray for you, to watch over you and help you, so long as you shall continue with us. God grant that loving and being loved, serving and being served, blessing and being blessed, we may be prepared while we dwell together on earth for the perfect fellowship of the saints above." The above form of admission was included in the church manual when it was revised and reprinted in 1910.

An historic decision in the history of the church was taken on May 8th, 1919 when it was decided to merge the Ecclesiastical Society with the church organization. The motion was as follows: "Be it voted by the members of the First Ecclesiastical Society of Washington, Connecticut, at a meeting called for that purpose, to hereby transfer and convey to the First Congregational Church of Washington, Connecticut, all the property and estate of such Society and

all trust funds held by it, to be held by said First Congregational Church under and upon the same uses and trusts upon which the same have been held by the Society." Thereupon the Society's Committee proceeded to execute and deliver the deeds necessary for the transfer.

Following the action of the Ecclesiastical Society, a meeting of the church was held and unanimous approval was given to the decision of the Ecclesiastical Society. They voted to accept gratefully the transfer of all property and funds and to observe the same conditions for their use as had been observed by the society. Certain changes had to be made in the Standing Rules in order that this might be done. It was agreed that there should be a Society's Committee, the duty of which should be to care for all the material interests of the church, its property and trust funds, and to make a report at each annual meeting of the church. When the committee was constituted, it was decreed that there should be three members. At the present time there are five members on the committee.

When the church was first organized the method of financing the church was by taxation. The appropriate committees decided what the expense was to be and each family of the church and society was asked to bear its proportionate share. Later on, the method of financing the church was by the sale of pew rentals. As time passed, members of the church came to feel that this method had distinct limitations. When strangers entered the church to share in the worship service, there was an awkward problem as to where they should sit. Therefore, in 1905, the members of the Standing Committee sent out a letter to the members of the church and to the citizens of Washington not connected with other churches, assuring them that a hearty welcome in

the church awaited them and that there was ample room for everyone. The letter is too long to be quoted in full but it went on to say that many of the pews had not been sold and were therefore open to any one. Furthermore there were many pew holders who were happy to have others share their pews with them. Hence it was hoped that no one would remain away from church under the impression that they were not welcome.

Presumably this letter was well received and no doubt created a more hospitable atmosphere in the church service. At any rate the pew rental system continued for a number of years. Then in 1922 there was a deficit of $300 and a committee was appointed to arrange matters so that such deficits would be eliminated in the future. It was composed of Elnathan Mitchell, Dr. F. W. Wersebe and S. Ford Seeley. The following year they brought in a recommendation to have free pews, the money to be raised for church expenses by an "Every-Member-Canvass." It was agreed that the committee should be continued and should draw up plans for such a canvass, calling a special meeting of the church when the plans were ready. This arrangement was carried out and the Every-Member-Canvass was launched with great success.

At the annual meeting of the church on January 3rd, 1924, Deacon Charles G. Fenn expressed his great satisfaction with the new system because it symbolized a free church. He said that no one remembered the exact date when the sale of pew rentals had begun. He recalled, however, a story told him by Daniel Canfield, regarding the opposition of John Gunn to the rental of pews. Mr. Gunn opposed it strenuously but the decision was taken. Thereupon Mr. Gunn bid off the highest priced pew and engaged a number of boys,

including Daniel Canfield, to come in just as the service was about to commence, each having a piece of money which would require changing to pay for his sitting. This finished, he was motioned to his seat. Mr. Gunn's opposition was on the basis that it made the pews private property.

The astonishing success of the Every-Member-Canvass may be seen in the rapid increase in benevolence giving. In 1919 the Missionary apportionment of the church was $500, total gifts to benevolence being about $900. After three years of the new envelope system, the gifts for benevolence reached a total of $3,000 in the year 1922. There was a similar increase in the giving for home expenses.

There were many improvements in the equipment and property of the church during the regime of Mr. Carter. As early as 1900 there was a good deal of discussion regarding the need for a chapel in connection with church activities. This hope was not fulfilled until some years later. It was in 1910 that the memorial tablet was hung outside the vestibule of the church, giving the important dates in the history of the church. It reads as follows:

"This church was organized in 1741. Its first meeting-house, a log shed, was built in 1742. The second church was raised in 1754 and destroyed by fire in 1800. The First service in this the third church was held on Thanksgiving Day 1801. The original spire and belfry, torn down in 1845 and only partly restored, were completed in 1910, the clock and chimes added."

The mention of the clock and chimes has reference to the generous offer of Mrs. Mary Brinsmade Van Sinderen to have the church spire remodeled and to place a clock thereon as a memorial to her husband, William Leslie Van Sinderen. The chimes consist of four bells which are in-

scribed as follows: First, "Presented to the Ecclesiastical Society of Washington in memory of William Leslie Van Sinderen by his family." Second, "O Lord, Our God, Be thou our guide, That by thy help, No foot may slide." Third, "On earth peace, goodwill to men." Fourth, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." The clock and chimes were in working order on June 1st, 1910 and to commemorate the occasion, Mr. Carter preached a special sermon on May 29th using the text, Genesis 11:5—"The Lord came down to see the tower which the children of men builded."

During this same year of 1910 there were alterations in connection with the entrances to the church and the church was painted. Also there were improvements and repairs to the organ, an electric motor and blower being added. Again in 1923 there were substantial repairs to the organ and to the church building costing approximately $1,000.

There were a number of gifts made to the church during the pastorate of Mr. Carter. Some of these gifts were for specific purposes such as improvement in the equipment. Among those who made gifts of this nature were Miss Jennie McKissock, John Woodruff, Miss Addie H. Woodruff, Daniel C. Nettleton and C. B. Nettleton. Cornelius B. Gold gave a piece of land to the church. Many years before, Daniel Frisbie had given a sum of money to the church, the interest of which was to be used for the poor, and this fund was used from time to time for that purpose.

There were those who left sums of money to the church without definite instructions as to use and these sums were set aside as an endowment fund, the interest to be used for current expenses each year. Among those who gave in this way were Mrs. Julia L. Richards, Mrs. Amelia J. Galpin, Mrs. Sarah K. Mitchell, John M. Black and, more recently,

Miles Aspinwall. It would not be possible to give a complete list of all those loyal friends who have made gifts to the church through the years. For all such gifts the members of this church have been and are today deeply grateful.

The modernizing of the church equipment included the installation of electric lights and of furnaces in the church. A modern touch was given to the communion service by the use of individual communion cups, beginning in 1900. New hymn books were purchased in 1907, and in 1914 two tablets were placed at the rear of the church, containing the names of the ministers and their years of pastoral service.

In 1906, the members of the church cooperated with Mr. C. B. Gold in his plan to have a new road constructed across the society's land on the Green, north and east of the church. This new development was carried to a successful conclusion and the arrangement of roads was constructed as we have it today. In 1922 Deacon Charles G. Fenn was asked to erect markers to show, as far as possible, the land still remaining on the Green covered by the original grant to the Ecclesiastical Society.

It was during the pastorate of Mr. Carter, especially the earlier years, that both the prayer meeting and the Christian Endeavor Society held a prominent place in the program of the American churches. This was no less true of our church here in Washington. There was also an organization of girls called "Daughters of the Covenant." The Sunday School continued to be an important part of the program. Mention must also be made of the Romford branch of the Sunday School which in the year 1901 had a membership of twenty-five. Mr. and Mrs. Carter began the custom of an annual party for the children of the cradle roll, a custom that is still continued.

There have not been many references in this history to the ministry of music in the church. This has not been due to a lack of appreciation of the importance of music. From the early colonial days with the psalm-singing and the flute, to the coming of the reed organ and finally the vested choir, music has had an important place in our church life. But the records have had little to say about the work of the choir or the playing of the organ. Down through the years, much emphasis was given to the musical part of the church program, even though such efforts did not receive wide publicity. There are many members of the church today who recall with heartfelt appreciation the organ playing of Mrs. Powell Seeley and Mrs. William J. Ford and the capable leadership of choir directors like Earle Buckingham, William G. Brinsmade, Russell Clark and Henry W. Seeley.

It was in 1914 that Mrs. Powell Seeley completed twenty-five years as organist of the church. At the annual meeting in 1915, in appreciation of her many years of faithful service, the members of the church presented her with silver knives and forks, Mrs. John C. Brinsmade making the presentation.

During Mr. Carter's pastorate Hampton Sunday became an annual feature of the church program. This was quite natural in view of the fact that Mr. Turner, who had been a pastor of the church, was now in a responsible position at Hampton and spent his summers in Washington. Each year the Hampton quartet came to Washington and sang at a Sunday morning service, at which time there was a special offering for the Institute.

Another project carried on by the church was the showing of moving pictures in the old town hall. Through a committee organized by Mr. Carter and Mrs. John C. Brins-

made, suitable moving pictures were secured and shown at periodic intervals. Dr. F. W. Wersebe and Mrs. J. I. West took an active interest in this work.

It would not be possible in a book of this nature to describe in any adequate way the part played by members of the church and the people of the community in the various activities connected with the World War. Such an account would take up far too much space. There are two scrapbooks in the Gunn Memorial Library filled with clippings, photographs and other records relating to the World War. There is, for example, a pictorial account of the "Sister Susie Society," an organization of young women. Some years previous to the war, they were a reading and sewing club. After America entered the war, they became an active group of workers, specializing in the making of refugee garments and other useful articles.

The Washington Chapter of the American Red Cross did yeoman service during the period of the war. It was first organized on March 1st, 1917 under the following officers: Chairman, Dr. F. W. Wersebe; secretary, Mrs. A. C. Titus; treasurer, A. S. Gregg Clark. Mrs. Walter Russell, as executive chairman, had charge of all the work.

Like other communities throughout the nation, the people of Washington entered wholeheartedly into such activities as food production and conservation. There was a town defense committee. The Washington Home Guard was organized as a part of the State Guard under the following officers: Capt. Frederick J. Ford; 1st Lieut. Ralph J. Averill and 2nd Lieut. Curtis T. Woodruff. There were war rallies on specific occasions. The people of the community responded generously when asked to invest in Liberty Loans. For his many services in connection with the raising of funds

for the Liberty Loan, Red Cross and Y. M. C. A., Mr. S. Ford Seeley received an engraved memorial from the members of the Washington War Bureau of which he was chairman.

The Neighborhood Club was the village forum, first organized in 1914 by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Oldham, and held in the home of Mrs. Amelia B. Colby. When the meetings grew large during the summer months, they were held in the Washington Club House. During the winters the members met in the Brownley Inn. Mr. Carter was a close student of the war and made a report of the war situation at each meeting of the forum. Mr. John C. Brinsmade spoke at each meeting, giving an account of what was going on in this country. Whenever possible there was also an address by a speaker invited for the occasion. Mr. Carter's resignation from the church in 1925 was a heavy blow for the Neighborhood Club but meetings continued until 1928 under the direction of S. Ford Seeley and John C. Brinsmade.

In the scrapbook at the library there is a list of eighty-seven men who enlisted or were drafted from Washington during the World War. They entered many different branches of the service. Nine men were members of the 102nd Regiment of the 26th Division of the American Expeditionary Forces. Of these men called to the service, three gave their lives for their country. Louis P. Gage, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, was killed in the battle of the Argonne on Oct. 15th, 1918. Francis Eliot Seeley, a member of the church, died Oct. 23rd, 1918, from wounds received in the same battle. Warren B. Mitchell, also a member of the church, died in New York City, Jan. 22nd, 1920, from the effect of wounds received in the San Mihiel offensive.

The scrapbook lists twenty-one other men who had asso-

ciations with Washington and who served the nation in various capacities during the war. It also mentions twelve women of Washington who served in various ways during the war. The people of this community were very proud of the fact that Brigadier-General Benjamin D. Foulois, head of the Aviation Section of the War Department, was a native of this town. Among the men and the women thus active in the national service during this critical period were a goodly number who were members of the Congregational church.

During the war, Mr. Carter preached a number of sermons that aroused keen interest, several of which were printed. There were several special services held in the church. Such a service was held on July 7th, 1918, when Capt. Frederick Ford brought in a beautiful silk flag which Miss Charlotte Brinsmade then presented to the church. Mr. Carter accepted the flag on behalf of the church. The flag was placed in position by Charles Fenn, chairman of the Society's Committee, while the congregation sang the Star Spangled Banner.

On Sunday, July 6th, 1919, a special patriotic service was held in the church and was called "The Demobilization of Our Service Flag." During the singing of the national anthem the flag was brought in by four ladies. After the name of Francis Seeley was read, Mr. Carter offered a short prayer in his memory. Then followed the reading of the list and after each name the congregation responded with the words "For thy merciful protection of him we thank thee, O God." Mr. Carter followed with an illuminating sermon on the text "Lest we forget" Deut. 4-9.

The ringing of the Congregational Church bell at 3:30 on Monday morning, Nov. 11th, 1918, awakened the people of Washington from their sleep and they were not long in

realizing the significance of the joyful message. It was to announce the long awaited armistice. Patriotic citizens took turns ringing the bell and kept it up until after 7 o'clock.

During the war years much valuable work of a patriotic nature was done by the Judea Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The Judea Chapter was organized June 8th, 1898, with twenty charter members, the first regent being Mrs. Frederick Gunn, widow of the founder of the Gunnery School. Besides its own activities of a patriotic and educational nature, the D. A. R. cooperated in the establishment of other organizations like the Red Cross Chapter, the Bryan Hall Library and the Visiting Nurse Association.

A great event for the people of Washington was the dedication of the Gunn Memorial Library in June 1908. It was the culmination of plans that had been maturing for several years. As early as 1890 a small sum had come into the hands of the Library Association. This was the nucleus for the construction of a new building. At a library meeting in 1901, it was suggested that steps be taken to increase the fund under the leadership of Senator Platt and Dr. Ford. Mr. W. L. Van Sinderen as the President of the Library Association carried through a reorganization. Mr. E. H. Van Ingen and Mr. Richard S. Barnes made generous donations for the library building, the former suggesting that it be given the name, "Gunn Memorial Library." Mr. E. K. Rossiter as the architect gave generously of his time. At the dedication exercises there were addresses by Mr. Carter, Mr. Clarence Deming, and the reading of an original poem by Dr. Rossiter W. Raymond.

No account of this library would be complete without a reference to the beautiful ceiling, painted by Mr. H. Sid-

WILBUR S. DEMING

MINISTER

1935–

THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

dons Mowbray and unveiled on July 4th, 1914. As a resident of Washington it was Mr. Mowbray's desire to make this splendid gift to the people of this community. There is a group of paintings, all illustrating the classic Greek story of Ceres, the goddess of agriculture and Proserpine her daughter who is carried by Pluto to the center of the earth. It is not too much to say that these beautiful paintings are well worth a visit to Washington.

Another event of great significance took place on May 29th, 1918, when the new edifice of St. John's Church was consecrated. We have already referred to the Episcopal Church built by John Davies, as a memorial of the Davies family, in the area now called Romford. In 1815 a piece of land was given to the parish by Ephraim Baker and the building was removed to its new site near the Green, where it remained for a hundred years. This building was torn down in 1917 to make way for the new building completed in 1918. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on May 19th, 1917 by the Grand Lodge of Masons in the state of Connecticut. The architect was Mr. E. K. Rossiter and the style of the building is early Gothic. The chancel is decorated with beautiful paintings by Mr. H. Siddons Mowbray, the central feature of the paintings being the figure of St. John. Rev. Theodore M. Peck was rector of St. John's when the new church was built and was instrumental in raising funds for its construction.

A notable gift to this community was recorded on November 14th, 1925, when Mr. E. K. Rossiter deeded to a group of citizens the Steep Rock Park Forest. For thirty-five years Mr. Rossiter had been acquiring the forest lands around Steep Rock from which, at the high points, beautiful views of the Shepaug River valley can be obtained. Mr. Rossiter

had laid out carriage roads leading through the park to the summit. The tract of land was in excess of 200 acres. Among the conditions laid down in the deed was the provision that no automobile should be driven upon the land for pleasure purposes, and also that no building should be erected. Those named by Mr. Rossiter to have the care of this property were as follows: Adrian Van Sinderen, George H. Vaillant, Hamilton Gibson, Arthur L. Shipman, Arthur C. Titus, Victor McCutcheon, E. Winthrop Rossiter, H. Siddons Mowbray and Miss Anne Van Ingen.

For over fifty years the Washington Choral Club was an active organization under the able leadership of Dr. Arthur D. Woodruff. Dr. Woodruff spent his summers in Washington and each summer, under his direction, the Choral Club gave a concert. These concerts reached a high level of excellence arousing great interest in music among the people of Washington and surrounding towns. The Golden Jubilee Concert of the Choral Club was held on August 23rd, 1929. Until the club hall was built, these concerts were given in the Congregational Church.

A pastorate of thirty-one years is an event in the life of any church. It indicates strong ties of affection binding pastor and people. And yet there comes a time when each pastoral bond is broken. That time came for Mr. and Mrs. Carter on March 19th, 1925. There had been many expressions of appreciation of them and of their work through the years. Now had come the time for parting. In his letter of resignation, Mr. Carter expressed his gratitude to the members of the church for their cooperation during his years of service. Above all he was grateful to God for His mercies during the years spent in Washington.

Mr. C. B. Nettleton, Miss Louise Van Ingen, Mr. S. Ford

Seeley and Dr. Turner were requested to arrange a meeting of the church to act upon the resignation. A committee composed of Mrs. John C. Brinsmade, Dr. F. W. Wersebe, Mrs. S. Ford Seeley and Mr. H. S. Mowbray were asked to draw up resolutions expressing the appreciation of the church and community of the work done by Mr. and Mrs. Carter during their thirty-one years in Washington. It was agreed that the resignation would take effect on Nov. 1st, 1925, and that Mr. Carter should be offered the position of pastor emeritus, without salary.

Upon the completion of the thirty-first anniversary on June 26th, 1925, an address was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Carter as a testimonial. We quote the following passages: "On this thirty-first anniversary of your pastorate, your friends have gathered to honor you and to express the affection for yourself and for Mrs. Carter that has deepened with the years. To the pastor comes, peculiarly, the petty criticisms that are the thoughtless expressions of our fretful moods. With this in mind, we delight in tendering you this testimonial as a permanent record of that love and respect in which the whole community holds both you and Mrs. Carter. As preacher you have made this pulpit known beyond the borders of town and state for its liberal, practical and helpful Christianity.

"As teacher you have made live the word of God and have instilled in the hearts of many the spirit of service that is the perfect fruit of that teaching. As pastor you have increased the influence of this church in the community. You have comforted the afflicted, have rejoiced with those that rejoiced; have indeed been like the good shepherd. As friend and neighbor, we have had pleasure that you considered us as such, for you have cheerfully assumed the burdens of the

Good Samaritan. As citizen you have ever been foremost in promoting the welfare of our village. Of these virtues we are justly proud and we pray God that in the years to come these relationships may continue."

A special service in recognition of Mr. Carter's long pastorate was held on Sunday, August 30th, 1925. The committee of arrangements was composed of Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, Roger S. Forbes and Herbert B. Turner. Rev. Herbert B. Turner presided at the service. Dr. Hillis spoke on "The Contribution of the Rural Church to the Republic." Rev. Roger S. Forbes of Philadelphia spoke on behalf of the summer residents, in appreciation of the Congregational Church in Washington and of Mr. Carter's services.

At the annual meeting on December 30th, 1925 it was announced that Mr. Carter had accepted the office of pastor emeritus and that Mr. and Mrs. Carter would retain their membership in the church.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Recent Events

LITTLE TIME was lost between the resignation of Mr. Carter and the search for a new minister. Mr. Carter asked that his resignation take effect on November 1st. On October 29th, 1925, it was unanimously voted to extend a call to Rev. Tertius van Dyke to become the pastor of the church. Replying to the church letter, Mr. van Dyke expressed his deep appreciation of the call but pointed out that it would not be possible for him to consider the matter until after the meeting of the Presbyterian General Assembly in May, 1926. As a result the church voted to leave the issue in abeyance in the hope that Mr. van Dyke would be able to accept the call later on.

Mr. Henry W. Seeley, on behalf of the Committee, again approached Mr. van Dyke on May 16th, expressing the hope that he could now come to a decision. On June 2nd, Mr. van Dyke wrote Mr. Seeley accepting the call and agreeing to begin work in Washington about September 1st, after severing his relations with the Park Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City of which he had been pastor since 1919.

Mr. van Dyke is the son of the late Dr. Henry van Dyke who was preacher, poet, professor at Princeton University and a former minister to the Netherlands. He received his education at Princeton and Oxford Universities and at the Union Theological Seminary. He spent two years with his father in the Netherlands during the World War assisting in war work. His first pastorate was with the Spring Street Presbyterian Church in New York City where he remained three years from 1913 to 1916. Mrs. van Dyke before her marriage in 1924 was secretary at the Park Avenue Presbyterian Church and a former resident of New Haven.

The installation of Mr. van Dyke took place in the church on October 8th. The Council met in the morning to conduct the necessary business and hear a statement by the new pastor dealing with his faith and experience. Luncheon was served at noon, the installation taking place in the afternoon. At the latter service the sermon was preached by Dr. Henry van Dyke. Mr. Carter gave the charge to the people and Dr. Mendenhall of New York gave the charge to the pastor, the prayer of installation being given by Dr. Turner.

A notable meeting was held on November 25th, 1926 when the members of the church celebrated the 125th anniversary of the church building. This happened to be on a Thanksgiving Day since the first service to be held in the new church in 1801 was on Thanksgiving Day. Mr. Carter made the principal address, suggesting that the history of the church might be divided into three periods. There was the frontier age during the pastorate of Mr. Brinsmade. There was the period of rural advance extending up to 1840. And there was the later period of growing tolerance with theological views of a more liberal type. Dr. Turner was not able to be

present at this meeting but sent a special message which was read at the service.

During the pastorate of Mr. van Dyke there were two memorial gifts presented to the church. One such gift was the remodeling of the platform, pulpit and choir rail. This gift was presented by Mr. Frederick Jackson, Mr. Robert Jackson and Dr. Arthur H. Jackson, in memory of their father and mother, Dr. and Mrs. George Jackson. It was to be known as the Jackson Memorial. The following committee was appointed to put the plan into execution: Mr. Herbert Faulkner, Mr. H. Siddons Mowbray, Dr. A. H. Jackson and the pastor.

The other gift was the offer of a new organ by Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Van Sinderen as a memorial to Mr. Van Sinderen's mother, Mrs. Mary B. Van Sinderen. The organ chosen by Mr. and Mrs. Van Sinderen was a beautiful instrument, to be installed by the Estey Organ Company of New York. In making the gift Mr. Van Sinderen expressed the hope that the new organ would promote three things in Washington.

"First, That the Congregational Church will become even more a singing church and that this instrument will be a further inspiration to those present to join heartily in the service.

"Second, That the officers of the church may find it possible to make available for practice purposes this instrument for the use of serious students of the organ whether inhabitants of Washington, or pupils of either the Gunnery School or Wykeham Rise and will take active steps to try to foster the efforts of worth while students.

"Third, That good music may be brought to Washington

by extending invitations to eminent organists to give recitals upon this instrument, such recitals to be open to all music lovers in Washington, whether they be members of this congregation or not."

In expressing their sincere appreciation of this gift, the members of the church cordially concurred in the desire of Mr. and Mrs. Van Sinderen that the organ might increase the love of music among the people of Washington. Details concerning the installation were left in the hands of a committee composed of Mrs. S. Ford Seeley, Dr. A. H. Jackson and the pastor.

About this same time, in May of 1927, it seemed best to investigate the possibility of improving the lighting of the church. The committee appointed reported in July that the expense of a chandelier would be about $500. In view of the fact that Dr. Herbert B. Turner had passed away on May 1st, it was decided to raise the money by popular subscription and that the chandelier be a memorial to Dr. Turner, pastor of the church from 1884 to 1892.

Sunday, Feb. 25th, 1928, is therefore an historic date in the life of this church. For it marked the completion and the dedication of the three memorials. The Jackson Memorial included the restoration of pulpit, platform and choir rails. In this memorial is included a portion of the pulpit of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Northville said to have been built about 1828. This was secured through Mrs. D. W. Tallmadge and Mrs. William A. Parfit of Northville.

The three-manual Estey organ began its career of usefulness with Mr. Van Sinderen as organist, playing the following hymns which were favorites of Mrs. Mary B. Van Sinderen:

Oh God Our Help in Ages Past.

In the Cross of Christ I Glory.

Love Divine All Love Excelling.

For All the Saints Who From Their Labors Rest.

The architect for the organ screen and other restorations was Mr. Waldron Faulkner. In connection with the dedication of the organ, there was an organ recital on March 8th by Mr. R. Huntington Woodman, organist of the First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn.

In addition to the memorials and the remodeling of the Parish House there were other additions to church equipment during the pastorate of Mr. van Dyke. In 1930 Mrs. R. S. Barnes presented the church with new hymn books. The hymn book chosen was "Hymns of the Christian Life," edited by Milton S. Littlefield and published by A. S. Barnes and Company. In 1932 the church clock and chimes were electrified by Mr. Delafield DuBois who generously gave his services for that purpose.

There were changes in the church procedure during this period. One such change took place in 1927 when the Standing Rules were amended as follows: "There will be an annual meeting of this church for the transaction of business during the last week in July or as near that date as the church may find it convenient." This regularized a practise that had been going on since 1924. Having the annual meeting in the summer months enabled summer residents to come into closer touch with the life of the church.

Another innovation was the organization in 1928 of a Committee of Missions composed of seven members. The purpose of this committee was to increase the missionary interest of the church and to bring the members of the church

into closer relationship with the general missionary program at home and abroad. It also was to stimulate the raising of special funds, arrange for speakers and organize classes of study. Therefore the Standing Rules were amended so as to provide for a missionary committee of the church.

On June 24th, 1932 there occurred an event of considerable importance to the people of Washington. It was the dedication of the Bryan Memorial Hall. This beautiful new building was the gift of the late Gregory Seeley Bryan of Bridgeport as a memorial to his parents who had lived in Washington. The gift included $200,000 for the construction of the building and $100,000 for its endowment. It was fitting that a large number of townsfolk and others from nearby communities should gather together for the dedication. Henry W. Seeley presided on behalf of the trustees and Mr. van Dyke offered the prayer. Other speakers included Cameron Clark, the architect, Mayor Buckingham of Bridgeport and Judge Walter M. Pickett.

Another dedication ceremony took place on July 4th, 1933, when the Washington War Memorial was dedicated, consisting of a large native boulder, located in the little park at Washington Depot. The memorial tablet was appropriately placed upon the boulder. There was a short parade headed by the American Legion Fife, Drum and Bugle Corps of New Milford, in which members of the Legion took part. At the ceremonies Rev. R. E. Carter offered prayer and Judge Walter M. Pickett gave the principal address, after which the tablet was unveiled. The boulder was given to the committee by Deacon Clarence B. Nettleton and was said to weigh about fifteen tons.

It was during these years that a number of prominent

and beloved members of the Washington community passed away. Funeral services for Walter Bronson were held in the Congregational Church on February 6th, 1927. Mr. Bronson was a lineal descendant of Colonel Increase Moseley, one of the founders of the Congregational Church. Mr. H. Siddons Mowbray died on January 23rd, 1928, and a tablet in his memory was unveiled in the Gunn Memorial Library on June 4th, 1931. He was a member of St. John's Church. On June 10th, 1927 occurred the death of Mrs. Mary McLane Van Ingen, who had taken such a great interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of Washington and had given so generously to numerous good causes. She also was a communicant of St. John's Church.

Mrs. O. H. Platt, the widow of the United States Senator Orville H. Platt, passed away in that same year on October 17th. As a little girl she had lived for some years in the home of General Brinsmade and had attended the Judea Female Seminary which the General's daughter, Mary, had established. When the Gunn Memorial Library was built, Mrs. Platt was instrumental in establishing a museum on the basement floor of the library and arranging for a caretaker three afternoons a week. Heretofore historical papers and articles had been kept in a private dwelling. Mrs. Platt took keen interest in making the museum a center of educational interest, dividing the exhibits into three sections, the Colonial, the Indian and the Philippine. There are many unique and rare articles, especially in the Indian section of the museum. Mrs. Platt left a fund for the maintenance of the museum in memory of her father, Truman Smith, who was a United States Senator from Connecticut. Mrs. Platt was an active member of St. John's Church.

The death of John C. Brinsmade on August 21st, 1930

removed one of Washington's most active and useful citizens. He was the great-great-grandson of Rev. Daniel Brinsmade who was the pastor of the Congregational Church for forty-four years. Not only had Mr. Brinsmade distinguished himself as an able school administrator but he had also taken a leading share in various town activities. He served three terms as a representative in the Connecticut legislature and one term as state senator. He was a member of numerous organizations and an active worker on behalf of many community enterprises. Mr. Brinsmade was a staunch supporter of the church program, serving as deacon and in other useful capacities. He was greatly beloved by the entire community.

In September, 1930 the funeral of William A. Watts was held in the Congregational Church, Mr. van Dyke and Dr. Clapp of the United Church in New Haven officiating as ministers. As a young man Mr. Watts had settled in Washington and with his father had bought the old Brinsmade and Baker store at the Depot. Later Mr. Watts moved to New Haven and became a partner in the Bronson and Townsend firm which he helped to make one of the largest hardware wholesale houses in New England. Mr. Watts never lost his interest in Washington and at the time of his death was planning to make it his home.

In his will Mr. Watts left a sum of money to the Congregational Church to be used for the benefit of the people of Washington. There were two annuities to be paid from the fund but when they lapsed, the fund was to pass into the hands of the church and to be under the supervision of the officers of the church. As he expressed it in the will, the fund was to be used for general welfare work or activities de-

signed to improve the moral and physical conditions of the community and make the town a better place to live in.

The death of Elnathan Mitchell took place on April 12th, 1931 in Richmond, Virginia, while he was en route from his winter home in Florida to his family home in Washington. He was the founder of the Mitchell Dairy Company in 1896 and retired in 1930 when the Company merged with the Borden interests. Mr. Mitchell was a life deacon of the Congregational Church and active in all its affairs. An old tradition of the Mitchell family had been that the eldest son be named Abner and his son be named Elnathan, this custom being continued through succeeding generations. For many years Mr. Mitchell was president of the Judea Water Company of Washington.

The Washington community was greatly shocked to learn on October 30th, 1932, of the sudden death of Rev. James T. Carney who was struck by an automobile. For ten years he had been the rector of St. John's Church. He had taken an active part in the community life of the town. He was struck down while crossing the street in front of the rectory and was taken to a hospital but failed to regain consciousness. Mr. van Dyke took part in the funeral services at St. John's Church, forty clergymen joining in the procession to the cemetery. Mr. Carney was succeeded by Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, the present rector of St. John's Church.

Mrs. Herbert B. Turner passed away on May 10th, 1934. At the funeral service in the Congregational Church on May 13th, both Mr. Carter and Mr. van Dyke took part, in addition to Mr. Mathew. Mrs. Turner was Mary Mitchell, daughter of Abner Mitchell.

At a special church meeting on May 29th, 1933, Rev. Tertius van Dyke stated that he would be busy for about a year

in writing the biography of his father, Dr. Henry van Dyke, who had passed away on April 10th. The pastor laid the matter before the members in order that they might do what seemed best for the interests of the church. After a discussion and a widespread expression of sincere appreciation of the services of Mr. and Mrs. van Dyke on behalf of the church, it was unanimously decided to grant Mr. van Dyke a leave of absence for a year without pay, with the privilege of an additional six months if he so desired. The church also expressed the fervent hope that Mr. van Dyke would return to his work as pastor of the church at the earliest possible date.

It was then decided to engage a full time substitute during the period that Mr. van Dyke was to be absent and to empower the Executive Committee to take the necessary steps. The choice fell upon Mr. Hamish Connolly Mathew who was the leader of a Boys' Club and active in social work in New Haven. Mr. Mathew is a graduate of the University of New Zealand in the land of his birth and of the Yale Divinity School. He also studied for a year in the New York School of Social Work. He was chaplain of the New Haven County Jail and in 1930 had made a survey of the jails in the State of Connecticut. Mrs. Mathew is the daughter of Rev. Albert Thompson who for many years was a missionary in Palestine.

The service of ordination for Hamish C. Mathew took place on Tuesday, December 5th, 1933 in the Congregational Church. Among those who took part were Dr. H. Richard Niebuhr of Yale Divinity School, Dr. Theodore M. Shepherd of Norwich, Mr. Ewing of Woodbury and Mr. van Dyke who offered the prayer of ordination.

The death of George Crowther on April 26th, 1934

brought sorrow to his many friends in the Congregational Church where for forty-seven years he had been doing the work of sexton. Preceding him John Taylor Platt had been sexton for about thirty years, beginning his work during the Civil War era. Mr. Platt was a cousin of Senator Platt and the grandfather of Miss Winifred Fenn and Mrs. Russell F. Clark. Mr. Crowther was also in charge of the cemetery during the same period in which he was sexton of the church. During all those years he had filled an important niche in the life of Washington. His place as sexton was taken by Clarence Richmond.

The work of Mr. and Mrs. Mathew brought forth a cordial response on the part of the church members as is indicated by a resolution adopted at the annual meeting on August 8th, 1934. Mr. Mathew was greatly interested in the work of the Sunday School and helped to reorganize it. At the conclusion of their year of service, Mr. and Mrs. Mathew decided to make a trip to New Zealand, leaving on March 14th, 1935. Therefore on March 3rd there was a farewell reception for Mr. and Mrs. Mathew given by the members of the church. Dr. Percy B. Wightman spoke with sincere appreciation of their work and on behalf of the church presented them with a farewell gift of money, wishing them God-speed.

Following close upon the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Mathew came the resignation of Mr. van Dyke. Writing on March 19th to the Executive Committee of which Paul Cruickshank was chairman, he explained that it was not possible for him to fulfill his family obligations within the period he had specified. He would not be free for some time to come. He felt therefore in all justice to the church that he should tender his resignation and asked that it be ac-

cepted. This request was granted, together with many and sincere regrets. As expressed in the resolution: "Resolved that we accept the Rev. Tertius van Dyke's resignation with the deepest regret and express to him our hope that before we have engaged another pastor, his affairs will be in such condition that he can consider returning to us."

This brought upon the church the necessity of seeking a new pastor and the following committee was appointed for that task: H. W. Seeley, Walter Geer, C. T. Mason, C. B. Nettleton, Mrs. F. J. Ford, Mrs. A. H. Jackson, Mrs. F. W. Wersebe, Mrs. L. C. Woodruff, Miss L. Van Ingen and P. F. Cruickshank. It was decided that the committee should hear various ministers during the summer and then report their findings back to the church.

It was during this same summer of 1935 that the people of Washington were greatly enthused over the local celebration of the Connecticut Tercentenary. This included an old village fair and a cavalcade of old-time horse-drawn vehicles. There was an historical Review Parade in which people were in costume and in which famous revolutionary characters were impersonated. There was an exhibition including portraits of early residents as well as works of art by Washington artists of the present time. Governor Cross was present for the great occasion and saw the parade which depicted 300 years of Connecticut's history. It is said that the largest crowd ever to witness a public function in Washington was present during these festivities.

During the summer months Mr. Carter filled the pulpit at the Congregational Church and gave a special sermon of an historical nature during the Tercentenary. In the meantime the committee seeking a new pastor had heard various preachers and reported at the annual meeting on August

THE PARISH HOUSE

THE PARSONAGE

14th that their choice was Rev. Wilbur Stone Deming, a missionary of the American Board in India and at present in America on furlough. Dr. Deming was seriously considering the advisability of remaining in America because of the educational needs of his three children and was therefore receptive to a call. He received his education at Brown University and Hartford Theological Seminary. He had been in India for three terms, most of the time being spent in educational, social and literary work. In 1927 Dr. Deming received the Ph.D. degree from Hartford Seminary Foundation. Mrs. Deming's home was in Fairfield, Connecticut, before going to India in 1919.

After receiving the report of the committee, the members of the church endorsed their report and voted to send a call to Dr. Deming. The latter in his reply expressed his appreciation of the call and accepted it, signifying his readiness to begin work at Washington on September 8th. The installation took place on October 29th and among those who had a share in the service were Dr. Rockwell Harmon Potter of Hartford Seminary, Dr. Oscar E. Maurer of New Haven, Rev. G. Homer Lane of Torrington and Mr. van Dyke.

During the past five years the church has continued to maintain its normal growth and its many and varied activities. A new manual was printed in the fall of 1936 as the older manual was out of date. For a year the church cooperated with the other churches of Washington in giving religious instruction in the public schools but this work was not continued after 1936 as it was felt to be a duplication of the work of the Sunday School.

In the summer of 1936 portions of the church ceiling fell down, making it necessary to raise funds and put in a new ceiling. An appeal was sent out to the members and they re-

sponded generously, contributing in all about $2,800. This was sufficient for the work that had to be done. In the meantime the Sunday morning services were held in the Parish House.

During these years there have been various changes in the musical arrangements for the church. Mrs. Marian Fowler succeeded Helen Farrand as the church organist and her place was taken by Mr. Richard Fisher of the Yale Law School who also replaced Henry W. Seeley as choir director. When Mr. Fisher resigned in the fall of 1938, his place was taken by the present organist, Mr. Robert Knox Chapman of Wethersfield. During the past two or three years there have been special musical features in connection with the church program such as organ recitals and a cantata.

The forum has continued to be featured each summer under the able leadership of Mr. Carter. It has been held each Sunday evening in the church during the months of July and August. Mr. Carter has spoken at many of the forum meetings and has discussed current events. Other speakers also have taken part.

Each summer there has been a fair on the Green. This fair has not only been the means of raising funds for special objects but it has also brought many of the summer residents into closer fellowship with the church. While these fairs have required a good deal of work, yet they have been eminently worth while.

A new venture in Washington has been the Young People's Conference, held the past four summers in the Gunnery School and also using the equipment of the Congregational Church. This gathering is sponsored by the Religious Education Committee of the Congregational State Conference. Young people come from churches all over the

state and remain here for a week of instruction, worship and recreation under the guidance of carefully-chosen leaders. It has been meeting at the end of June in each year and bids fair to become a regular feature of our Congregational state program.

Similarly Hampton Sunday continues to attract attention and remind us of the close bonds of friendship that unite this church with Hampton Institute, dating back to the years when Dr. Turner was connected with that institution. Each summer, on a Sunday in July, the Hampton quartet visits Washington, singing on Saturday evening at the Washington Club and on Sunday morning at the Congregational Church. Although many of Hampton's warmest friends are no longer living, we continue to maintain our interest and look forward to their annual visit, at which time there is a special offering in our church for the work at Hampton.

Another special feature of our church program is the Union Lenten service. During each Lenten season for the past three years the four Protestant churches of Washington have united in union devotional services, one in each church in succession. This has helped to create a closer fellowship among the churches of Washington.

Another wholesome development has been the holding of church fellowship suppers during the winter months. They are held on Sunday evenings in the Parish House and are addressed by invited speakers, usually those who have been engaged in missionary work in various parts of the world. We have also had ministers and secretaries of missionary boards. Several of these suppers are held during the cold weather season and they make a substantial contribution to the spirit of fellowship in the church.

A sad yet triumphant event took place in the church on December 6th, 1939. It was our final tribute to Mrs. John C. Brinsmade who was lovingly laid to rest upon that day. The church was well filled, including the gallery, with relatives, friends and Gunnery alumni. The beautiful flowers and wreaths witnessed to the love which so many held for her. The minister was assisted in the service by Mr. van Dyke who read the Scripture and by Mr. Carter who offered a touching prayer. The casket was taken to the cemetery in a horse-drawn carriage, followed by the Gunnery boys, the family and friends.

At the annual meeting in 1940 Mr. C. B. Nettleton asked to be relieved of his duties as church treasurer on the ground of increasing physical disabilities. This request was granted and he was made treasurer emeritus. A special greeting of appreciation was sent to him in recognition of his faithful unselfish work as treasurer of the church for forty-four years. A few weeks later Mr. Nettleton was presented with a radio by the members of the church as a small token of their appreciation and affection.

A big event in the life of the church took place on October 16th, 1940. This was a reception in the Parish House to Mr. and Mrs. Carter upon the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary. About 150 people were present, some coming from Woodbury, New Haven, Waterbury and other places. There were also quite a few present from the other churches of Washington. After the fellowship hour and appropriate remarks by the pastor, Mr. and Mrs. Carter were presented with a portable radio on behalf of the members of the church. The room was tastefully decorated with autumn leaves. Delicious refreshments were served, the wives of the deacons presiding at the table.

The first significant event of the Bicentennial year was the week of special services which were held from February 18th to 21st, 1941. The guest speaker was Rev. Allen Hackett of Stamford, Connecticut. In view of the anniversary year and the beginning of the Lenten season and the tragic conditions of the world due to the war, it seemed fitting to ask the members of the church to set aside the week of February 17th to consider together the message and place of the Christian Church in the world today. There were three evening meetings in addition to a men's supper, a women's luncheon and a young people's supper. It was the general consensus of opinion that the meetings were exceedingly worth while and that they helped to strengthen our loyalty and deepen our faith.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Church and the Schools

From 1741 to 1779, when Washington was incorporated as a town, the members of the Ecclesiastical Society and the church were responsible for the schools of the community. This was not a task that they desired to shirk as they believed wholeheartedly in education. They not only wanted men of learning as their ministers but they also desired the rudiments of education for all members of the community. Side by side with the church, the custom was to establish the school house. This was true of most communities in early Connecticut. There was a love of learning that impelled our forefathers to establish an educational system that began with the rural school, then sent students to the grammar school and finally made it possible for the best students to have a college education. Colleges like Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Brown and Williams are a testimony to the passion for learning that characterized the early settlers of New England.

Because of the difficulties of travel, the area of the Judea Parish was divided into different school districts. It is interesting to read some of the old school records. For

example, there was a meeting of the First School Society of Washington on October 5th, 1806, of which Daniel N. Brinsmade was moderator. He was elected treasurer of the School Society at the meeting. The following were elected as the District School Committee: Norman Hazen, Samuel Leavitt, Elijah Perkins, Truman Parker, James Logan, Calvin Calhoun and David Platt. The following were elected as overseers: Rev. E. Porter, Dr. Ira Bronson, Preston Hollister, Warren R. Fowler, Jabez T. Warner, Daniel Calhoun, Samuel Baker and Simeon Mitchell.

The old school records covering a period of about forty years have been saved and a copy of some of the records may be found in one of the scrapbooks in the Gunn Memorial Library. These records reveal that the school committees had charge of other matters, in addition to the work of the schools. There was the upkeep of the burying ground, the hiring of a driver for the hearse, the trimming of the hearse and the repairing of the cemetery fence. At a meeting of the School Society in 1823, a committee of five was appointed to secure a burying ground and sell it in lots so as to pay for the land and thus it would not be an expense to the School Society. In these various activities the ministers and members of the Congregational Church took an active part.

Interesting resolutions may be found in the record book of meetings of the men in charge of the Church Hill District. In 1838, "Voted, the committee hire a woman teacher three months certain, and four if it meets the approbation of the district. Voted board be $1.25 a week." In March, 1839, "Voted to set up a summer school five or six months." In the fall of the same year, the following votes were passed "Voted to set up a winter school for four months. Voted the committee procure a man teacher. Voted the committee

make the necessary repairs to the school house and procure two benches, a stove, and six cords of hard wood chopped. Voted board per week $1.50 and wood sold per cord $2.70. Voted the committee be collector of the tax."

Mrs. Abigail Brinsmade Gunn recalled attending school in a school house which preceded that of the District School House on the Green. Presumably it was as early as 1826 when she was a child of school going age. It is probable that this building was located on the high bank at the left of the old Litchfield Road, a little beyond where the Gunn Memorial Library now stands. At that time it was the school house of the Center District.

In 1857, so writes Mary G. Brinsmade, a small one-storied school house stood on the Green at the top of the hill, not far from the present location of the Parish House. A door in the southwest corner opened into an entry which extended across the west end and which was filled with wood for winter use. Nails were along the wall for hats and coats and there was the pail of drinking water with its tin dipper. A door on the side opened into a square room which had windows on three sides and a wood stove in the middle. On the right side of the entrance on a raised platform were the teacher's desk and chair, and on the table was the large bell to call the scholars to school. The desks were of unpainted wood with a shelf beneath. School opened at 9 o'clock with the reading of scripture and a prayer by the teacher. There was an hour's recess at noon and the school closed at four in the afternoon.

In the view of the church members of those earlier days, there was a close connection between education and religion. The natural result of education ought to be the development of character. Mr. Porter had given leadership in the whole

field of religious education and under his guidance the religious instruction of young people had made great progress. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the members of the church organizing a Sabbath School Society of Washington, with a constitution providing for officers, a library, and for classes of instruction. It was stated that any person who should subscribe to the constitution and pay twenty-five cents a year for the use of the library should be a member of the Society. The earliest meeting recorded in the old record book of the Sabbath School Society took place on April 17th, 1829. The last meeting recorded in the book was on March 26th, 1875. At this meeting a resolution was passed, arranging for the disbanding of the Society, since the Sabbath School was to be taken over by the church.

Since 1875, the educational program of the church has been one of its most important tasks. At each annual meeting there has been a report of the work of the Sunday School during the year. Through the work of the Church School, the boys and girls have been given the necessary foundation which has qualified them to become members of the church at the appropriate time.

No history of this church would be adequate that did not enlarge upon the close relationship that has existed between the church and the Gunnery School. For ninety years they have lived side by side as good neighbors. The Gunnery School was founded by Frederick W. Gunn who was born in Washington on October 4th, 1816. His father was a farmer and for many years held the office of deputy sheriff. His mother was a devout Christian and an active member of the Congregational Church. It was her earnest hope that her son might enter the Christian ministry. As a boy Frederick was noted for his high spirits and his love of nature. He at-

tended school on the Green. In his tenth year the boy was called upon to face the tragic loss of both parents who passed away in an epidemic.

The expressed desire of his parents was carried out, however, and Frederick was prepared for Yale College which he entered in the class of 1837. After returning from college he seemed to be at loose ends temporarily, not being sure of the profession he desired to follow. He thought of becoming a doctor and in order to earn money to pursue medical studies he began teaching in the Academy at New Preston where he remained for two years. In the fall of 1839 the "Academy" on the Washington Green being vacant, Mr. Gunn received the permission of the trustees to open a school in it. The school immediately became a success.

It was during these years that the New England communities were being deeply stirred by the antislavery excitement and Washington was no exception. Extended reference to this subject has been made in a previous chapter. The abolitionists in Washington were few but were very active and ably led by Frederick's older brother John. Because Frederick sympathized with the abolitionists, his school was boycotted, the trustees of the "Academy" prohibited his use of the building, and in 1845 he accepted the invitation of friends to open a school in New Preston. In 1847 he opened a school in Towanda, Pa., where he remained for two years. In the meantime, on April 16th, 1848, he was united in marriage to Abigail I. Brinsmade, the daughter of General Daniel B. Brinsmade, the ceremony taking place in the Congregational Church at Washington.

It was but natural perhaps that Mr. and Mrs. Gunn longed to make Washington their permanent home and the way opened in 1849 when he again began teaching in the

Academy on the Green. In 1850, through the help of General Brinsmade, they became the owners and started the family school that has been in continuous existence ever since.

As an educator Mr. Gunn had original ideas, many of which were in advance of his time. He wanted as little school government as possible, preferring self-control rooted in the conscience of each student. In the words of Clarence Deming, the school was like a small republic. That such an experiment could function successfully in those early times was largely due to the genius of Mr. Gunn. In his mind character training took precedence over the development of the intellect. Both were necessary but character was the more important. The quality he especially stressed was moral courage. A man of large impressive appearance himself, he also believed heartily in physical stamina. His methods of punishment were exceedingly novel and many are the amusing stories that have come down through the years. It was seldom that he felt it necessary to use the rod. There is only one case of verbal defiance. "You haven't the pluck, sir, to say boo to a goose," he once cried to a listless pupil. "Boo" shouted the angry lad, looking Mr. Gunn in the eye. When a titter ran around the school the master joined the boys in a hearty round of laughter.

In 1878, Mr. Gunn gave a statement of his views to the State Teachers' Association in which he stressed certain convictions about the rights of boys. "I am convinced," he said, "that there is an immense amount of soul power lost because teachers hold themselves aloof. I am not ashamed to have been a boy among boys. We have secured in some degree the rights of the slave. We are laboring not without hope for the right of the woman to vote. But how few teachers ever make any 'ado' about the rights of boys. We

provide schools for their intellectual training but what school has fitly provided for the amusement of its pupils? Boys have an inalienable right to their fun. I charge you, young teachers, let the boys have their fun and share it with them. How much of healthy discipline of mind and body it may bring! Without lowering your high moral standard, you may find your way into the boy-heart."

One of the unique characteristics of the Gunnery School from the beginning has been the close bond between the school and the community around it. In the early days, Mr. Gunn took an active interest in community enterprises such as the library and the Dramatic Association. He organized the Judea Lyceum which became a center for the discussion of current topics. As a method of bringing together the school and the people of the community, he established the Friday evening receptions at the Gunnery. These were informal gatherings of a social nature, open to all, and helping to stimulate the social life of the village.

Perhaps the key to his character is to be found in the fact that Mr. Gunn was a natural liberal, possessing a healthy human interest in all phases of life. One could never doubt the sincerity of his motives. He refused to be bound by conventions. He might take an aggressive stand on a moral issue but he did not descend to personal bitterness. He was always a warm and steadfast friend. In view of his strength of character it is not surprising that his influence has remained an active force in the Gunnery School to this day.

What shall be said of his relationship with the church? He was, as stated in a former chapter, an active opponent of the slavery views of the pastor, Mr. Hayes. It is a fact that he never became a member of the church. He found it difficult to subscribe to certain theological dogmas. Yet from

the practical standpoint, he had an active share in many good works carried on by the church. In the words of Mr. E. K. Rossiter, "He took so active a part that, though he could not be regarded as a pillar of the church upholding it on the inside, he was like a strong buttress supporting it from without."

Each Sunday, through the years, the Gunnery students of Congregational background have been in their pews at church. In the early years they sat downstairs. After the organ had been removed from the back gallery, the Sunday School library room taking its place, the Gunnery students sat upstairs in the back gallery. In more recent years they have again gone downstairs, sitting on the right side of the church.

It is said that when Mr. Gunn returned from college, he delighted in using some of his spare moments in ringing the church bell, when the bell was supposed to be silent. This was particularly true on the occasion of weddings. The society had solemnly voted that the practice was undignified and that the bell should not be rung during weddings. No matter how securely the bell tower might be fastened, however, when the hour for the wedding came the bell would ring. The people felt confident that Frederick Gunn must be at the bottom of the ingenious schemes that defied the church authorities. Perhaps this explains why, through the years, the Gunnery students have enjoyed ringing the church bell to help celebrate special occasions, in spite of all efforts to prevent it. It must be confessed that the amusing contest still goes on.

One evidence of the close ties between church and school has been the use of the church building by the school for significant occasions. The graduation ceremonies are held

there each year. One can never forget that it was from a crowded church that Mr. and Mrs. Gunn, each in turn, were carried to their last resting place in the beautiful cemetery. Mr. Gunn passed away in August, 1881, and the coffin was borne to the grave in his favorite wagon, drawn by the white horses he had driven for eighteen years over the Washington hills. Mrs. Gunn lived to a ripe old age, passing away on September 13th, 1908.

On October 12th, 1882 a large number of people crowded into the church on the occasion of the unveiling of the Gunn monument. One person present guessed that there might be nearly two thousand people at the service. Henry Ward Beecher gave the principal address. In addition to the large choir, there was a quartet from New York under the leadership of Dr. Arthur D. Woodruff. From the church the throng proceeded to the cemetery where Senator Platt presented the monument to the family. A touching response was made by John C. Brinsmade, the new master of the Gunnery.

Another notable function taking place in the church occurred in 1916 at the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Frederick William Gunn. The celebration began on Friday evening at the Washington Club Hall when there was an informal reception to Mr. and Mrs. John C. Brinsmade. In a witty speech Dr. Arthur D. Woodruff presented a purse to Mr. and Mrs. Brinsmade, containing $1,335 in gold, money and checks, presented by friends and members of the alumni. On Saturday afternoon the church was filled with friends of the Gunnery School for the commemorative exercises. The main addresses were given by Dr. Richard Burton and Mr. E. K. Rossiter.

A most appropriate memorial to Mr. Gunn was the publication in 1887 of the book, "The Master of the Gunnery."

In this artistic volume are glowing tributes to his memory written by George A. Hickox, Orville H. Platt, Ehrick K. Rossiter, Clarence Deming, James P. Platt and Henry W. B. Howard. The beautiful illustrations for the volume were drawn by William Hamilton Gibson.

Upon the death of his father-in-law in 1881, John C. Brinsmade became the head of the school and ably carried on the work established and built up by Mr. Gunn. In the years that have followed, both the school and the church have been closely identified with the names of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Brinsmade. All efforts for the community welfare have had their loyal and enthusiastic support. Under their guidance the Gunnery School continued to mold the characters of the boys who came as students and who went out into the world, loyal to its traditions. After the death of Mr. Brinsmade, Mrs. Brinsmade continued to take an active interest in the school and remained until her death, a year and a half ago, the "mother of the Gunnery School."

In the year 1922 a new headmaster came to the Gunnery in the person of Hamilton Gibson, an alumnus of the Ridge School and the son of a well-known Gunnery boy. Under his leadership the school underwent a process of expansion and rebuilding. The old familiar building was taken down and in its place a number of new up-to-date buildings were erected. Outwardly the appearance of the school was greatly changed. It now possessed a plant able to cope with all the demands made upon it. Inwardly the same traditions were cherished that had been passed down from the beginning.

Mr. Gibson remained as headmaster for fourteen years and was succeeded by Rev. Tertius van Dyke in 1936. In 1937 Mr. van Dyke was made permanent headmaster, a position he now holds. The school continues the many useful

functions for which it was founded. It continues to maintain an eager interest in the churches and in the various activities of the town. On each New Year's Eve, people from far and near enjoy the traditional hospitality of the Gunnery School in one of the most unique New Year's Eve parties to be held anywhere.

In the year 1894 a new school was started in Washington by William G. Brinsmade, a younger brother of John. For thirteen years he had been a teacher in the Gunnery School. He started his school for boys in the buildings that now constitute the Mayflower Inn and named it the Ridge School. The number of students soon rose to ten or twelve and a little later to twenty. The school was closely associated with the Gunnery School, Ridge boys going to the Gunnery for mathematics and chemistry and Gunnery boys to the Ridge for Latin and Greek. Mr. Brinsmade was especially gifted in the teaching of classical languages. He was also noted for the quiet and effective manner in which he maintained discipline.

In addition to his school duties he took an active interest in numerous community enterprises. For many years he was the center of musical interest as the director of the choir of the Congregational Church and of the Washington Glee Club. He was active in the work of the Ecclesiastical Society, being chairman of the Society's Committee for a long period. Also for many years he was chairman of the School Board. He also took great interest in the Washington library and was a member of its Board of Directors.

When Mr. Brinsmade passed away in 1908 the community lost one of its most useful and beloved citizens. The school was continued until 1919 under the care of Mrs.

THE GUNN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

William G. Brinsmade. During the last seven years it was a school for small boys.

The Wykeham Rise School for Girls was founded in 1902 by Miss Fanny E. Davies. It began on the Green in the house now known as the home of Mrs. Colby. From the beginning the school stressed scholarship, good sportsmanship, and good citizenship. The name is derived from the background of the founder whose ancestors have a memorial tablet in Winchester Cathedral opposite the tomb of William of Wykeham.

A small school called the Judean School was taken over by the Wykeham Rise School at the request of the committee members who controlled it. The late Mrs. Arthur Titus was its teacher at that time. The Hall on the Green was rented for the use of the combined school through the assistance of the late Miles Aspinwall.

When the five year lease neared its end the school had outgrown its quarters on the Green. Mr. Richard S. Barnes and Mr. Cornelius Gold both became interested in keeping the school in Washington and Mr. Barnes made an arrangement by which he built a suitable school on the present site and rented it to Miss Davies. After his death in 1913 the school was incorporated by Miss Davies and Mrs. Barnes. A destructive fire destroyed the plant in 1923 and it was decided to rebuild on the cottage plan. The Aspinwall place had been purchased and the two barns were converted into buildings. As time passed it seemed best to put the school on a permanent basis, Mrs. Barnes and Miss Davies turning over their interests to a Board of Trustees. The school is now run on a non-profit basis. In 1939 Miss Davies retired as Headmistress, her place being taken by Miss Elsie Lanier, the present Headmistress. Through the years the students

at Wykeham of a Congregational background have been regular attendants at the Congregational Church.

In the year 1930 the Romford School was founded by Mr. Paul Cruikshank. This is a preparatory school for boys and is located at Romford on the bank of the Shepaug River. For a number of years Mr. Cruikshank was a teacher at the Gunnery before establishing his school. In 1936 Mr. Cruikshank left the Romford School in order to become the new Headmaster of the Taft School. Mr. Paul Cornell is the present owner and Headmaster of the Romford School. As in the case of the other two schools, quite a few students of the Romford School regularly attend the Congregational Church.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Parish House

At the Dedication of the Judea Parish House there were several addresses sketching the background and describing the activities which had taken place in buildings which preceded the Parish House. This information has been included in one of the Town History Papers and we are indebted to it in the preparation of this chapter.

The first building to be used as a combined parish house and community center was the old Academy. In 1818 a committee obtained permission from the Ecclesiastical Society of the Congregational Church to build an Academy on the edge of the Green, southeast of the church and not far from it. The committee erected a two story building which faced the west, the rear wall of which, twenty feet in width, was placed against the rocks. From this eastern wall there was a steep slope to the road about thirty feet below. The lower room was given over to school purposes.

The upper room had various uses. For example it was used for prayer meetings and other meetings of the church as occasion demanded. Singing schools were held there. It was also the place of meeting for the village forum or lyceum

in which discussion on current topics took place and to which outside speakers were invited. School exhibitions were held there including recitations and plays. It was a place for holding town meetings and sometimes a court. In the early years this room was called the Academy chamber but later was referred to as the conference room.

The Washington library was established in this hall, the books being kept there and auctioned off at the library meeting each month. The books were kept in a large closet placed against the eastern wall and filling the space between the window and the south wall. The books stood in two rows on the shelves, those in the front row often being pushed aside as the auctioneer examined those in the rear by the light of his candle.

Mr. Clarence Nettleton speaks of this monthly library meeting as a red letter evening for most of the citizens of the town. The bids began at two cents and some books went as high as fifty cents. Magazines like "Harper's" and "Scribner's" often brought around twenty-five cents. Mr. Gunn was the first president of the Library Association and for many years was the auctioneer. He was succeeded in that task by Mr. Sheldon Logan.

Miss Amy Kenyon states that between 1820 and 1856, the Academy was the only building, in addition to the church, where a public gathering could be held. It was in 1856 that the Seminary building became available for public use. This building stood close to the east side of the road which skirted the west side of the Green, continuing to the south toward Kirby Corners. Its site was slightly to the south of the Abbey, now the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Jackson.

It was in 1873 that the Academy and the district school

houses were put up at auction by Mr. Gunn and removed from the Green. They were placed together to form the Abbey. This name is due to the fact that the house was remodeled for the use of Mrs. Gunn and was her home for twenty years, thus taking the name by which she was so widely known.

In 1869 Erastus J. Hurlbut had his store enlarged and set back from the road. In order to be of service to the community he put a second story above the store, to be used as a hall for public purposes. This need was felt since the upper room of the old Seminary was not large enough to accommodate the crowds who came to see Mr. Gunn's exhibition. The new room was opened to the public in December, 1869, and was given the name of Farmers' Hall. Among those who took part in the program were Rev. Willis Colton, Rev. Henry Upson, F. W. Gunn and Rev. George Richards of Bridgeport. There was a stage at the western end of the hall and the rest of the room was furnished with settees seating about two hundred people.

In this same year the Dramatic and Literary Association was organized under the leadership of Mr. Gunn. Appropriate scenery was painted and put in place, costing $300. The drop curtain pictured handsome draperies parting in the middle to show Mount Vernon. The first dramatic entertainment was given on the evening of January 20th, 1870, with the plays, "The Spirit of '76" and "Helping Hands." Many other plays followed during the next few years and received an enthusiastic reception. People came from surrounding towns to see them. Writes Mrs. Van Ingen in her "Record of Plays" during the six years in Farmers' Hall, "The Dramatic and Literary Association flourished. As a result of its labors the scenery was

paid for; a bay window costing one hundred and fifty dollars was added to the parsonage, pictures to embellish the hall were bought and about one hundred dollars were raised toward the purchase of a piano. There still remained in the treasury three hundred dollars." This money was the beginning of the fund for the Hall on the Green.

The Farmers' Hall was used by the Gunnery Alumni during their reunions of 1870 and 1872. On each occasion plays were given. Mr. Hurlbut's home was the building now used as the Washington Club House. The store stood further back from the road and about twenty feet to the southeast. In 1902 Charles G. Fenn bought the two story building which had included Mr. Hurlbut's store and the hall. He removed it in small sections to a site near his house and made a carpenter shop of it.

In the meantime, in 1872 and 1873 many townsfolk felt that a building should be built which would serve as a community center much as the Academy had ministered to community needs many years before. Mr. Earle Buckingham and Deacon Hickox took an active part in the raising of the necessary funds. According to Mr. Elnathan Mitchell, they drove all over town visiting the farmers and residents in the effort to interest the people of Washington in the project. It was not a simple task as the building when erected cost $6,200.

When sufficient pledges were secured, the contract was given to Simeon Calhoun and Charles G. Fenn, George Chase being the mason and Frank Titus in charge of the excavation work. In describing the work of construction, Mr. Fenn spoke of the heavy beams that were used. The lumber was sawed to order in the State of Maine and it required two months for delivery. Mr. Chase was an expert mason and no

problem seemed to be too difficult for him to solve. The building was finished about January 1st, 1874, in time for the dedication on January 5th.

The main entrance to the building was in the center of the western front. It opened into a vestibule from which two doors opened into the large room which reached from the south side to the north side of the building. For many years this room was called the Chapel. On either side was a staircase leading to the auditorium. Across the building to the east were the same rooms which are now there, namely, the ladies' sewing room and a larger room first used as a library and now as a kitchen.

The Chapel was used for prayer meetings and committees and also as a community center. As a rule such meetings took place each Thursday afternoon and Sunday evening. If the pastor was unable to be present for any reason, men like Deacon C. L. Hickox or Deacon S. J. Nettleton conducted the services. The platform was placed at the north end of the room in front of a triple window. On the platform was a desk made by Simeon H. Calhoun.

It was in this room that the Christian Endeavor Society was organized and in which the meetings were held. Here also were held the meetings of the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies. It was the scene of the annual church dinner and of sundry suppers given to raise money for various projects. At first the kitchen was in the present ladies' sewing room. After the library was moved into the Gunn Memorial Building, the kitchen was moved into the vacated room, the sewing room being enlarged by adding a bay window, a gift of Mrs. Van Ingen.

During these years an important part of the church program was the work of the Sunday School. The growing needs

of the school made it advisable to move the Sunday School classes from the church building to the Chapel and sewing room. This was done in 1924 and from that time to this the Sunday School has been held in the Parish House.

The old-fashioned singing schools were a popular activity carried on in the Chapel. Among the teachers at the singing schools were Earle Buckingham, who taught for many years, and also Henry Bradley. Here also were held church socials. According to Mrs. Addie Hollister, these church socials began during the pastorate of Mr. Thrall. She recalls the acting out of Lowell's poem "The Courtin' " at one of the church socials. It was received with great enthusiasm by the young people but some of the older church members thought it was too frivolous for a church social and in a room where prayer meetings were held.

The second floor of the building contained the auditorium and was referred to as the Hall. In contrast with the low ceiling of Farmers' Hall, people took great pride in the lofty roof with its open timber-work of massive beams supporting it. The Hall was entered on the west by two stairways leading from the north and south to the doors under the gallery which occupied the western end of the room. At the eastern end was a large stage with private entrances from the ladies' parlor and library below. There were two dressing rooms and two closets above the stage. The Hall was able to seat four hundred people.

The first play to be given in the Hall was "She Stoops to Conquer" on February 12th, 1874. This was soon followed by other plays such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Neighbor Jackwood." In addition to plays there were lectures and concerts and sometimes a church fair or a dance. There were various public functions such as gatherings to hear election

returns. On October 12th, 1892, there was a pageant of States given by the school children in honor of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. Church services were held in the Hall whenever it was impossible to meet in the church because of repairs. Banquets were given there as, for example, the Gunnery Alumni banquet of 1892 when William Hamilton Gibson was toastmaster. For several years the Hall was used as a gymnasium by the Wykeham Rise School and the pupils gave exhibitions of their gymnastic drills.

On May 30th, 1905, two short plays were given as part of the Gunnery Alumni celebration. During the first play, "A Suit of Livery," a door was slammed off stage dislodging a kerosene lamp from its bracket. The oil spilled and took fire, causing a blaze. Thereupon a small boy rushed to the middle of the stage shouting: "Fire, Fire." This started an immediate panic in the audience which might have ended in a terrible disaster had it not been for the presence of mind of a few men in the rear of the Hall. Miles Aspinwall leaped down from the gallery into the middle aisle and stopped the rush of the crowd for the stairs. S. Ford Seeley and William Beach who were present behind the scenes quickly stamped out the fire. In a short time the audience was calmed and the play was continued to its close.

After this event, the Hall was no longer used for the purpose of entertainment. It was felt to be too dangerous because of the fire hazard. The building of the Washington Club Hall was begun and the stage was removed from the Hall on the Green. Since that time most of the Dramalite plays have been given at the Club Hall. The enlarged room of the Hall on the Green was used for a while by Wykeham Rise for its basket ball matches. During the World War it

made a spacious workroom for the Red Cross. Later it became a store house. After the Sunday School moved from the church building, one end of the Hall was used for the Primary Department.

The use of the Hall on the Green by the Sunday School brought to a head the whole problem of more adequate facilities for the growing needs of the church. For some years there had been discussion as to what should be done about it. A few felt that the basement of the church might be fitted up for community uses. Another proposal was to add an addition to the north end of the church and thus secure rooms that could be used for the Sunday School and for other church needs. Finally on July 31st, 1927, the Executive Committee was asked to take steps to improve the facilities of the Chapel so that it might meet the needs of the Sunday School more effectively. On October 2nd, the Committee presented two plans, one costing about $5,000 and the other to cost about $12,000. The latter plan included the remodeling of the exterior and interior of the Chapel and the installation of plumbing and heat. It was decided to have a committee of three investigate the possibility of raising funds to carry out the larger plan. This committee was composed of Dr. Wersebe, Mr. Hamilton Gibson and Mrs. Wm. G. Brinsmade.

This special committee reported on October 30th that they had made a canvass of thirty friends of the church and judged that an amount of $9,175 could be secured from non-members alone, some of this money being already pledged. It was therefore voted by the church to adopt the more elaborate plan and to proceed with the work in accordance with the plans drawn up by Mr. Rossiter. This plan called for an exterior that was a reconciliation between

church and Chapel, harmonizing with the adjacent buildings. The exterior of the present Parish House is a replica of the hall in Hingham, Massachusetts.

At a meeting of the combined Executive and Society's Committees on November 2nd, two committees were organized for the purpose of carrying on the project. A Finance Committee was elected to raise funds for the project under the chairmanship of Dr. A. H. Jackson. The other members were as follows: S. Ford Seeley, F. J. Ford, C. P. Farrand, Miss Louise Van Ingen, Henry Van Sinderen, Mrs. Eleanor Braman, Mrs. J. F. Whitehead and Mrs. Lina Jagger.

H. W. Seeley was elected as chairman of a Building Committee to superintend the remodeling of the Chapel. The following were elected members of this committee: Mrs. F. W. Wersebe, Mrs. May Starkweather, C. C. Woodruff and Paul Cruikshank. Under the leadership of these two committees the work was brought to a successful conclusion.

In proceeding with the work it was found that while the church had a title to the first floor, some one else had the title to the second floor. When the building had been erected in 1874, the Washington Hall and Conference Room Association was formed and a charter procured from the Secretary of State. It was decided that each voting share was to be $25. The largest initial subscription was for 16 shares and there were quite a few single share subscriptions.

There were conflicting opinions regarding what the Hall and Conference Room Association should attempt to do. After several meetings an agreement was reached with the First Ecclesiastical Society of Washington permitting the erection of the Hall, the Association to maintain a chapel

and ladies' parlor for the use of the church during the life of the building.

In a letter to C. B. Nettleton, written February 1st, 1928, Miles Aspinwall as the only living original stockholder of the building stated that he had great pleasure in giving over the property of the Hall and Conference Room Association to the Congregational Church of Washington. With the letter he enclosed a check for $571.76, which as Treasurer of the Hall and Conference Room Association he was authorized to pass over to the Treasurer of the Congregational Church. Thus did the church take title to all property of which the Association was possessed.

Therefore June 21st, 1929, may be put down as an important date in the history of this church. It was the occasion of the dedication of the Judea Parish House. It was the fitting culmination of a long succession of events. The Academy, the Farmers' Hall and the Hall on the Green had all served their turn. New conditions and new needs had arisen and therefore changes had to be made. The dedication was thus a great occasion. The dedicatory prayer was made by Mr. Carter. There were quite a few brief speeches telling of the days that had gone before. In dedicating the new Parish House, Mr. van Dyke said, "Rejoicing in the past accomplishment and looking to the future with faith and hope and love we dedicate to God this Judea Parish House for the worship, work and fellowship of the Christian Church and the service of all Washington."

When the original building was dedicated in 1874 Emmeline Colton had played a piano solo. The dedication of the Judea Parish House was concluded by the same person, Mrs. Edward P. Hickox, going to the piano and playing for all to sing, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Looking Forward

It is not easy to summarize briefly the developments of two hundred years. There are too many complicating factors. Any effort to draw simple conclusions might fail to take into account all the evidence. Yet it may not be amiss if the writer should attempt to make a number of general statements concerning the past two centuries in the life of this church.

For one thing, we can find reflected in our church and community the historical epochs that have characterized our nation. One can read American history in terms of one community. No doubt that same assertion could be made of many communities. The history of our church has revolved around the moods of the moment. There was the frontier period in which new families settled in this area and established homesteads. There was the colonial era in which the Revolutionary War was the outstanding event. There was the slavery agitation which greatly stirred this community, creating sharp cleavages, and causing much controversy. This slavery agitation led to the War Between the States which left its mark upon our membership. As in the Revolu-

tion, so in the Civil War, there were members of this church and community who took part and there were those who gave their lives. There was the period of the World War of more recent memory. And there has been the intense preoccupation of our church members with the economic, social and political issues of the past decade.

Thus Washington and the First Church present a changing panorama passing from a rural emphasis to an industrious self-contained community with many local factories in operation. From the middle of the past century to the present time this industrial emphasis has given way to a residential community in which farming activities have been decreasing. Slowly but surely the farms of Washington have been passing into the hands of summer residents who have come here and who have been willing to pay substantial sums for summer homes.

Another observation one can safely make concerns the depth of the convictions held by the early members of our church. Theology was tremendously real to them. Their chief aim in life was concern for their souls. God was at the center of their lives and all their worldly affairs were arranged in the light of that fact. This religious emphasis followed a curve that went up and down in accordance with circumstances. It became more intense during the period of the Great Awakening at which time this church was founded. There was a slackening of interest during the Revolution due to the preoccupation of the people with that struggle. Religious interest again became dominant during the revivals that swept New England in the early part of the nineteenth century and in which this church took part.

In the minds of the early members of this church there was a close relationship between religion and morality. They

held firm convictions regarding both religion and morals. Just as they were strict in their Calvinism, so were they rigorous in their disapproval of levity or flippancy. Hence the resolutions passed at various times disapproving of promiscuous dancing, the breaking of the Sabbath, card playing and tableaux. Also the periodic interviews between deacons and those who received censure, frequently resulting in excommunication.

There can be no doubt that during the first century and a half this church held a dominant place in the lives of its members. It took first place in their community relationships, standing, in their affections, next to the family. It was the focus of their Sunday activities. It distinctly overshadowed other organizations that competed for the interest and time of the townsfolk. This is not to say that church members were delinquent in their political responsibilities or that they avoided other community tasks. It is to say, however, that from the community standpoint the church came first.

One notes the high quality of the ministers who have served this church. The record speaks for itself. As a group they have shown themselves to be men of high caliber, varied gifts and sincere devotion to their sacred calling. No two of them have been exactly alike. During the first century, there was friction between the church and most of the ministers. This would clearly indicate that the cause of such friction was not entirely on the side of the ministers. Yet we should not draw undue conclusions from the accounts of such friction. There is every reason to believe that for most of the time there has been a close fellowship of mutual trust and cooperation between the church members and their ministers. Some of the ministers have been of a rugged character

as, for example, Mr. Brinsmade and Mr. Hayes. Like Old Testament characters they battled for the Lord. Others have had social gifts or have exerted a devotional influence upon the membership. Dr. Porter stands out because of his interest in religious education and of the various organizations which he helped to establish. The church members of our time may well be proud of the ministers who have served them through the years.

A word here might well be said for the influence of the schools upon this community, more particularly the Gunnery School which has been in existence for ninety years. These schools have helped to permeate the community with progressive views. Former students have returned later to Washington as summer residents and have taken a keen interest in all community developments and given generously of their time and their money. If Washington is a distinctive community, as many feel to be true, part of that credit must certainly be given to the schools that have been located here.

At the time of writing, our church stands at a high point in terms of membership and budget responsibilities. Most of the three hundred and seventy-five members cooperate loyally in supporting the program. There are others in the summer community who, while not members, also share gladly in the life and work of the church. In maintaining an annual budget of approximately $8,000, the members of this church have demonstrated their loyalty in terms of effort and sacrifice.

As one surveys the national scene, it remains true that today, as in the years that have gone by, it is the members of Christian churches who are carrying community responsibilities. Church membership has prepared them for that

task and they do not shirk it. This remains true of Washington. The members of our churches are in the forefront of every wholesome enterprise or every appeal for help. The churches thus have a powerful indirect influence, entirely aside from their specific programs.

Yet it must also be admitted that the church is no longer occupying the spotlight by itself. There are many competitors in the field, all appealing for public interest and support. There are social, philanthropic and recreational organizations which tend to compete with the church in terms of community leadership. In this community, as in most communities, there is tremendous pressure upon the spare time of the citizen. It is difficult to find an evening that is free when the church decides to have an evening program of some kind.

Furthermore the bonds that unite people to their church are not as strong today as they were a century ago. This is because of the attitude of tolerance that characterizes most people. Many sincere church members are more irregular about church attendance on Sunday morning than were their fathers and mothers. Sunday has become a day of recreation for many, rather than a day for religious emphasis. It is easy for an attitude of tolerance to gradually become one of indifference and some church members travel that road.

This increasing tolerance is indicative of the fact that convictions are held with less tenacity than was formerly true. Many adult Christians of our so-called liberal churches are not quite sure what they believe. Usually they have had a few years in Sunday School during their youth and have attended church with a certain amount of regularity. Yet they are vague about their Christian convictions, whether

such convictions be a matter of theology or of personal conduct. Sunday activities have become a matter of the personal conscience rather than of church dictum and many consciences are flexible. The substance of Christian faith has become, for many, rather thin. People tend to be more easygoing and to be rather uncertain just where they are going. The situation is somewhat like the flippant remark often heard among young people, "We don't know where we're going but we're on our way."

Then what of the future? Have the preceding paragraphs appeared pessimistic? I did not intend to have them so. Will our church membership during the next few decades wax or wane? Will our church go on from strength to strength or will it merely reflect a glory that is gone, slowly losing its spiritual vitality? Such questions are not easy of answer and prophecy at best is a questionable procedure.

In an effort to answer the above query it might be said that each church is largely dependent upon the community situation in which it is placed. The members are the church and this will remain true in the years that lie ahead. If Washington is to be a growing community, that fact will immediately register in the life of the church. If the opposite is to be true, that also will directly affect the fortunes of the First Congregational Church. This church has been and is today dependent upon voluntary contributions in order to carry out its program. Lacking a substantial endowment, this situation will remain.

In addition to this obvious truth, there are the danger signals which have already been mentioned. Far too many people are casual about their church responsibilities. They are not in dead earnest. If such a trend were to continue or if it were to be enhanced, then the result might well be

ominous for the churches of Washington as well as of the nation in the years that lie ahead.

On the other hand, it may be said with equal truth that as the church goes so will go the nation. Above it was stated that as the community goes, so will go the church. The opposite is equally true. In the present crisis and world conflict it has been discovered that the last freedom to be lost has been religious freedom. Other freedoms disappeared first. People in Europe have learned that when they no longer possessed religious liberty, they were without any liberty. Europe has demonstrated to our world that the freedom of conscience is fundamental and that every other freedom is dependent upon it, such as racial, economic and political freedom. The state may give freedom to the church as in the Constitution of the United States. But that famous document happened to be drawn up by men who were brought up to believe in the freedom of the conscience.

As the people of our country increasingly realize the full import of this truth, I believe that they will turn to the church as the inspirational fount of all their liberties. They will cherish it as the guardian of the faith of their fathers. They will realize as never before the precious nature of their freedoms and of the sacrifices of New England ancestors on behalf of such freedoms. They will know without equivocation that the Christian church has been largely instrumental in giving to the American people their way of life and that if the health or vigor of the church is endangered then the American way of life may well pass from the scene.

Moreover it is my belief that man's supreme confidence in himself and in his own worth has had rude jolts in recent years. The note of optimism regarding the inevitableness of evolution is less in evidence. Human sin in all its ruthless

and destructive manifestations has caused thoughtful people to reconsider their sense of values. Man's dependence upon God and his need of God and his inability to build a wholesome world without God's help are becoming self-evident. It would seem as though the present trend had almost run its course and that it must be followed by a new sense of dependence upon a higher power. As a religion, impersonal science has demonstrated its limitations. As a religion, materialism has proven its bankruptcy.

Hence I look forward with confidence to the century that lies ahead and to the place that this church will occupy in the life of this community. I believe that the First Congregational Church of Washington will continue to stand for the higher values as it has done in the past. It will help to bring God into the experience of its members and to inspire them to serve the church in a spirit of joy and sacrifice. It will continue to take its place in the larger program of proclaiming Christ to the world at large, associated with other churches in that effort. As in the past, so in the future, it will continue to make its primary task the building of God's kingdom upon earth. We would, therefore, go forward in faith, seeking God's guidance and relying upon His strength. We would be true to the faith of our fathers.

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